

**63rd Session of the
General Assembly**

**Agenda item 59:
Holocaust remembrance**

**Statement by
Ambassador Gerhard Pfanzelter
Permanent Representative of Austria to the United
Nations**

New York, 3 November 2008

Mr. President,

Austria fully aligns itself with the Statement made by France on behalf of the European Union. We thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report on the programme of outreach on the "Holocaust and the United Nations". The report shows that Member States all around the world have benefited from the outreach programme since the adoption of resolution 60/7 in 2005.

Resolution 60/7 also urges Member States to develop educational programmes that will inculcate future generations with the lessons of the Holocaust in order to help prevent future acts of genocide, and in this context specifically mentions the Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance, and Research (ITF).

As the current Chair of the ITF, Austria is very grateful for the work carried out by the Secretariat under the outreach programme. Let me now share with you some aspects of the ITF's work under the Austrian chairmanship. ITF's work is based on the "Stockholm Declaration" of 2000. The Declaration features the quest for mutual understanding as one of the most important lessons to be learned from the Holocaust. The commitments it enshrines originate from the unprecedented character of the Holocaust that will always hold universal meaning.

The ITF's working groups function as a unique network of international cooperation comprising some of the world's leading experts in the field of education, remembrance and research. The intention is that teachers, students and the society as a whole learn about the Holocaust and the lessons to be drawn for present and future generations. ITF's efforts to mobilize support and expertise for Holocaust memorials contribute to the culture of Holocaust remembrance. Special working groups focus on the Genocide against the Roma as well as on the "Holocaust and other genocides".

The ITF by its very nature is particularly concerned with tendencies of diminishing or denial of the Holocaust. ITF comprises 25 member states but it carries its mission beyond its own geographical range. Gaining knowledge about and dealing with the Holocaust should be further mainstreamed. This calls for broader communication strategies with the aim of having Holocaust remembrance generally accepted as part of human rights education and learning.

One of ITF's main goals under Austrian chairmanship is to improve medial outreach. The ITF-Website, e.g., serves as an open accessible resource for mainstreaming Holocaust education, remembrance and research. ITF makes its tools accessible for the general public and seeks to deepen its cooperation with other organizations pursuing similar objectives.

On 10 November 2008, the day of remembrance of the 1938 Pogroms, ITF member states will come together with representatives of the UN, the European Union, the Council of Europe and the OSCE to discuss common objectives and experiences. I am particularly happy that the Special Adviser of the Secretary General for the Prevention of Genocide, Prof. Francis Deng, will also be present at this special event.

Thank you, Mr. President.