



Part 1. Forms of intolerance and discrimination

Afternoon, Session 2: Combating Antisemitism

Dan Tichon will be speaking as Chairman of the International Task Force for Holocaust Remembrance and Education for 2010, and will say a few words about this important organization. 5-10 Minutes

Dan Tichon Speech

Introduction

- In my former capacity as a Speaker of the Israeli Parliament, the Knesset, and as the Chair of the Israel-Kazakhstan Parliamentary Friendship League, I witnessed the establishment of the Republic of Kazakhstan, with all the difficulties and problems that it confronted in those first few years.
- Over the years, I have learned to appreciate the fact that Kazakhstan is a Muslim country that has, since its establishment, a robust and tolerant dialogue with many nations around the world. Indeed, religious tolerance is one of Kazakhstan's most important and worthy features.



ITF Background

- The International Task Force on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research, or ITF, was established in 1998 through the vision of the former Swedish Prime Minister, Göran Persson, who was motivated by a number of factors, including, by the shocking results of a poll conducted among high-school children in his native Sweden, which showed doubts about whether the genocide of Jews in World War Two actually happened.
- As a result of that survey, in the year 2000, Sweden organized an international conference, where 45 heads of governments ultimately decided to establish the ITF. Following that conference, the participants published the "**Stockholm Declaration.**"
- The ITF is an international umbrella organization consisting of 27 full member states, with several more in the process of joining. This Task Force unites countries, international institutions and International Organizations – some of which have signed memoranda of understanding with the ITF. These international organizations include the **Council of**



Europe and the OSCE, as well as observers such as the UN and UNESCO.

- The ITF focuses on education and research related to the memory of the Holocaust and issues concerning the current combat of Antisemitism and Holocaust denial and trivialization.
- This year I was appointed as the Chairman of the ITF – a year that also happens to mark the 10 year anniversary of the Stockholm Declaration.

The Stockholm Declaration

- All members of the Task Force are committed to the Declaration of the Stockholm International Forum on the Holocaust, which notes:

The unprecedented character and magnitude of the Holocaust (Shoah), which was planned and carried out by the Nazis, and fundamentally challenged the foundations of civilization.



- It is with the Stockholm Declaration in mind – the very foundation of the ITF itself – that I would like to quote the words of the former Swedish Prime Minister, Goran Persson:

**IT HAPPENED.
IT SHOULD NOT HAVE HAPPENED, BUT IT DID.
IT MUST NOT HAPPEN AGAIN, BUT IT COULD.
THAT'S WHAT HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE IS ALL
ABOUT.**

Holocaust Denial

- In addition to seeing the "classical" types of Holocaust denial emanating from right wing circles, in recent years we are also witnessing newer forms of Holocaust denial and trivialization coming from new quarters and groups, and in one case, even from the Head of a state that is a member of the United Nations.
- These days, the sad truth is that Holocaust denial has become closely interwoven with Anitsemitism.



Antisemitism

- As recent data shows, 2009 was probably the worst year of global Antisemitism since the end of World War Two. There has been no country, no city, and no continent that was not witness to Antisemitic manifestations.
- In recent years there has been a dramatic increase in antisemitic material available on the internet. Indeed thousands of antisemitic web-pages exist that have not received the appropriate response.
- The noted Holocaust scholar, Prof. Yehuda Bauer, called attention to the fact that World War Two was "an ideological crusade motivated by Antisemitism. This essentially means that a rampant Antisemitism led to the deaths of most of the 35 million people who lost their lives between the years 1939-1945, 6 million of which were Jews. **It starts with the Jews and ends with the WORLD!!!** Without fighting Antisemitism, one cannot fight Islamophobia, xenophobia and other forms of discrimination."



- In recent years we have witnessed 3 types of Antisemitism in the West.
 1. The first is the "classic", right-wing, Neo-Nazi Antisemitism, and I am glad that the OSCE is taking the lead in combating it.
 2. The second kind of Western Antisemitism involves second generation Muslim immigrants mainly in Europe. This form of Antisemitism is fed, among other things, by the lack of integration by these groups within European societies.
 3. The third form of Antisemitism is the left wing, liberal Antisemitism that is found in the media and academic circles.

The Establishment of the Standing Committee on Antisemitism and Holocaust Denial

- This is precisely the reason why the previous ITF Chair in 2009, Norway, initiated a decision to establish a Standing Committee on Antisemitism and Holocaust denial.



The Goals and Proposals of the ITF

- Two weeks ago, at the ITF Plenary held in Jerusalem, we started a laborious effort to chart a clear and workable mandate to combat Antisemitism and Holocaust denial.
- The ITF is working on recommendations for its member States. These recommendations are in the field of legislation, and include regulations for monitoring and combating Antisemitism in its classical forms and in its new current manifestations, including in the domain of cyberspace. We feel that this is a significant step forward in furthering the work of the Standing Committee.
- A new assessment is required. Words are not enough. We need a new way of thinking and a new approach to confronting the problem. We must use the media, including extensive use of web-sites and social networks.

Conclusion

- Today we are witnessing the repackaging of the classic forms of Antisemitism, which changes the nature and tools we must adopt in our fight against it. Once again,



Antisemitism is gaining momentum. It will not pass by itself. We need to combat it through education and legislation.

- It goes without saying that there is an enormous task ahead of us, and it will require a great deal of effort, creativity and above all, political will in the member States. Nevertheless, I am confident in the ITF's ability to follow through on these goals and look forward to seeing our work come to fruition.
- I regard the conference here in Astana as yet another landmark in our common effort.