

MINISTRY FOR EU AFFAIRS



Message on International Holocaust Remembrance Day

By Mevlüt Çavuşođlu,

Minister for EU Affairs and Chief Negotiator

Today is the International Holocaust Remembrance Day, commemorating one of the most shameful tragedies in the history of humankind. The Remembrance Day, which marks the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz concentration camp, was designated at the UN General Assembly on 1 November 2005 unanimously by 104 countries including Turkey.

On this occasion, we honour the memory of millions of Jews, Roma people and other minorities who lost their lives in a systematic annihilation by the Nazi regime. This crime against humanity is the common grief and shame of humankind.

Turkey not only embraced Jews who were sent into exile from Spain in 1492 in the Ottoman period, but also helped and protected its Jewish citizens and became a safe haven for all Jews, especially scientists and academicians, during World War II.

There is no trace of genocide in our history. Hostility towards the other has no room in our civilization. According to the teaching of Islam, the murder of one individual is regarded as murdering entire humanity. This perception is best manifested by Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan who considers anti-Semitism a crime against humanity and reacts resolutely against massacres in our region.

The founding philosophy of the EU, which is built on the common values of peace, tolerance and democracy, aims to prevent the repetition of suffering, wars and massacres of the past. However, the rising far right, xenophobia, Islamophobia and anti-semitism in Europe indicate that certain groups have unfortunately not yet drawn lessons from the painful experiences of history. For this reason, to create a sense of awareness that will help prevent the possible atrocities in the future and stop those that we witness today, remembering and reminding the Holocaust shall be a common duty for all of us, regardless of religion, language and race.

I would like to once again honour the victims of the Holocaust and other tragedies around the world.

