

Distinguished guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

It is an honour for me to be invited to this commemorative event at the Holocaust Memorial in Bucharest in my capacity as the Chair of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance. I thank you for this invitation and would like to take this opportunity to salute the presence of the minister of foreign affairs, Titus Corlatean.

We are gathered here today to commemorate the Romanian victims of the Holocaust; indeed the memory of the victims, and those who stood against it, should remain at the core of all our commemorative actions. IHRA's founding document, the Stockholm Declaration, issued at the end of the Holocaust Forum in 2000, seeks to honour the victims by strengthening and promoting Holocaust education, research and remembrance. The greatest honour we can offer is to take active steps, together, towards ensuring that this tragedy will never be forgotten and, by strengthening the moral commitment of our peoples and the political commitment of our governments, that such a tragedy will never happen again.

In recent years, Romania has acted to establish a Holocaust Memorial Day on 9 October, has passed legislation against the denial of the Holocaust, and has introduced the study of the Holocaust in schools. But challenges still exist and these efforts must be continued and strengthened. Later today I have been afforded the great honour of speaking in the Romanian Parliament. Romania is to be strongly commended for addressing the commemoration the Holocaust at the highest political level.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As the IHRA Chair, I am very much looking forward to bringing for decision, at our forthcoming meeting in Manchester in December, Romania's most welcome offer to chair the IHRA In 2016. We see their Chairmanship as a sign of your commitment to the Stockholm Declaration and to the victims of the Holocaust.

We commend Romania's efforts and join the Romanian authorities in paying our respects to all the innocent victims.