



Students everywhere will have the opportunity to learn more about the Holocaust thanks to a new online educational resource that debuted at United Nations Headquarters on Monday and showcases video testimonies of survivors of one of the world's greatest tragedies.

[IWitness](#) – produced by the [Shoah Foundation Institute](#) at the [University of Southern California](#) – provides teachers and students access to the video testimonies of more than 1,000 Holocaust eyewitnesses from the Institute's archive of nearly 52,000 testimonies.

“As students learn more about the Holocaust and the significance of this history today, they will soon discover its connection to their own lives and communities,” said Kiyo Akasaka, UN Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information, at the launch on Monday.

The UN partnered with the Shoah Foundation Institute in bringing more than 350 high school students to the world body's Headquarters to discuss their experiences with IWitness and to interview Holocaust survivor Roman Kent, whose testimony they have studied as part of IWitness.

“Our collaboration with the Shoah Foundation Institute is another wonderful example of how the Holocaust and the United Nations Outreach Programme works with organizations around the world to help young people – like yourselves – understand the history and horrors of one of the world's greatest tragedies that occurred many, many years ago before you were born,” Mr. Akasaka told participants at the event.

“With the IWitness online application, students everywhere can search, watch and learn about the real life stories of more than 1,000 Holocaust survivors,” he said. “You will also learn about the dangers of hatred and prejudice in our world today.”

The Shoah Foundation Institute was established by United States filmmaker Steven Spielberg in 1994 to collect and preserve the testimonies of the survivors and witnesses of the Holocaust. It maintains one of the largest video digital libraries in the world – nearly 52,000 video testimonies in 32 languages and from 56 countries.

“Through IWitness, survivors will continue to teach students about the Holocaust, inspire them to oppose intolerance, and empower them to develop the literacies needed for the 21st century,” said Stephen D. Smith, the Institute’s Executive Director. “We are grateful to the nearly 52,000 witnesses who have entrusted their memories to the Institute as a guiding light for all humanity.”

Monday’s programme was held as part of a series of events to mark the [International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust](#), which is observed annually on 27 January. This year’s theme is “Children and the Holocaust.”

In a related development, the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization ([UNESCO](#)) announced that Samuel Pizar, a Polish-born Holocaust survivor and acclaimed international lawyer, author and human rights activist, will be designated as an Honorary Ambassador and Special Envoy for Holocaust Education.

Mr. Pizar will receive the designation at a ceremony on Friday at UNESCO’s headquarters in Paris.

Source: [UN News Centre](#)