



International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust



The film tells the story of Petr Ginz, a child from Prague who perished during the Holocaust. The film opens a window into Petr's life through his artwork, novels, short stories and magazine articles, and the journey he made from child to young adult, from innocence to the painful awareness of inhumanity. By age 14, he had written five novels and a diary about the Nazi occupation of Prague. By age 16, he had produced 120 drawings and paintings, edited an underground magazine in the Theresienstadt Ghetto, and written numerous short stories. Petr Ginz was murdered in Auschwitz in 1944. What makes Petr's story so relevant, contemporary and unusual, is the fact that he drew and painted what he saw and imagined. In the midst of death and chaos, he calmly, objectively, and at times humorously, related the horrors of his everyday existence.

Marie-Paule Roudil is the Head of the UNESCO Office in Brussels and UNESCO Representative to the European Union. A trained lawyer, she was elected member of the collective consultation of UNESCO youth NGOs in 1985 when she contributed to the International Year of Youth and the World Congress on Youth. She later became a UNESCO consultant responsible for working on a new program on youth, human rights and AIDS in cooperation with WHO. From 2003 to 2010, Ms. Roudil was Chief of Section of the culture sector at the UNESCO Regional Office for Sciences, Venice.



Regina Sluszny is vice president of the organisation The Hidden Child. As a child she survived the war by hiding with a non-Jewish family between 1942 and 1945. When the war was over, she was able to return to her Jewish-orthodox parents and went to a Jewish-orthodox school for six years. For several years, Regina has been telling her story at schools and gatherings as a tribute to the people who rescued her from the German occupiers and saved her life.



Pavel Černoch works for the Press Service of the European Parliament. His background is in history and political science, with extensive studies, research and teaching in the fields of EU politics and Central European history. His doctoral thesis about Czech accession to the EU later appeared as a book. He has been the leader of the European students' association AEGEE (Forum of European students) and has previously worked for the European Commission Delegation in Prague, as well as for the Czech diplomatic service. He was appointed Director of the Czech Centre (Czech Cultural Institute) in Brussels in 2003 before he became a counsellor for the Czech Permanent Representation to the EU. Mr Černoch speaks 13 languages.



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THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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MESSAGE FOR THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF COMMEMORATION IN MEMORY OF
THE VICTIMS OF THE HOLOCAUST
27 January 2012

One and a half million Jewish children perished in the Holocaust - victims of persecution by the Nazis and their supporters. Tens of thousands of other children were also murdered. They included people with disabilities as well as Roma and Sinti. All were victims of a hate-filled ideology that labelled them "inferior".

This year's International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust is dedicated to the children - girls and boys who faced sheer terror and evil.

Many were orphaned by the war, or ripped away from their families. Many died of starvation, disease or at the hands of their abusers. We will never know what these children might have contributed to our world. And among the survivors, many were too shattered to tell their stories.

Today, we seek to give voice to those accounts. That is why the United Nations continues to teach the universal lessons of the Holocaust. It is why we strive to promote children's rights and aspirations - every day and everywhere. And it is why we will continue to be inspired by the shining example of great humanitarians such as Raoul Wallenberg, in this, the centennial year of his birth.

Today, as we remember all those lost during the Holocaust - young and old alike -- I call on all nations to protect the most vulnerable, regardless of race, colour, gender or religious beliefs.

Children are uniquely vulnerable to the worst of humankind. We must show them the best this world has to offer.

Thank you.

Extract from the Message of Ms Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO, on the occasion of the International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust, 27 January 2012

UNESCO was founded on the idea that lasting peace can only be built on mutual understanding. Transmitting the memory of the Holocaust is a vital part of the struggle to combat ignorance and prejudice through education in humanist values, the sharing of cultures and knowledge of history.

On this day, UNESCO reaffirms its determination to combat all forms of Holocaust denial. Education is a key front in this struggle and also UNESCO's unique contribution, through our work for youth, training of teachers and curriculum design.

The 2012 *International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust* is dedicated to the remembrance of children. The murder of children, which amounts to eradicating the future, is surely the most drastic sign of the attempt to annihilate a people. The vast majority of Jewish children in Europe, nearly one and a half million, were killed during the Holocaust. All of those children, whether they perished or were saved, carried within them the essence of the whole of humanity. Let us pay tribute to them.