

Debate Pack
23 January 2024
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General debate on Holocaust Memorial Day 2024

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1

Background

There will be a general debate on Holocaust Memorial Day in the Commons Chamber on Thursday 25 January 2024. The debate will be on the motion: “That this House has considered Holocaust Memorial Day.”

Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) has taken place in the UK on 27 January since 2001.

Each year, the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust chooses a different theme to enable audiences on Holocaust Memorial Day to learn something new about the past. Every theme is relevant to the Holocaust, Nazi persecution and to each subsequent genocide.

This year “Fragility of Freedom” is the theme for Holocaust Day 2024. More information is available on the [Holocaust Memorial Day website](#).

2

Press articles

[Britons urged to use Holocaust Memorial Day as moment for community cohesion](#)

The Guardian

21 January 2024

[Swadlincote: Holocaust Memorial Day exhibition opens in town](#)

BBC

20 January 2024

[There are no winners in war - Holocaust survivor](#)

BBC

22 January 2024

[British Jews 'caught in crossfire of public opinion this Holocaust Memorial Day'](#)

Jewish News

22 January 2024

[Remembering the horror of the Holocaust](#)

The Guardian

21 January 2024

3 Parliamentary material

3.1 Parliamentary questions

[National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service: Victoria Tower Gardens](#)

17 Jan 2024 | 9127

Asked by: Sir Peter Bottomley

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if he will erect temporary scaffolding in Victoria Tower Gardens to demonstrate the proposed size of the Holocaust Memorial.

Answering member: Simon Hoare | **Department:** Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

Detailed images showing the proposed Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre in Victoria Tower Gardens were considered at the planning inquiry in 2020 and are available on the Westminster City Council website: [Inquiry documents | Westminster City Council](#).

[Antisemitism](#)

04 Dec 2023 | 742 c3

Asked by: John Cryer

I agree with everything that was said by the previous questioner. Could the Secretary of State engage with his opposite number in the Department for Education and argue for the promotion of education about the events of the holocaust? I have believed for a long time that one of the reasons behind the increase in antisemitism, notwithstanding recent events, is the fact that the holocaust is now slipping from memory into history, and we need to perpetuate the analysis and grasp of that particular period of history.

Answered by: Michael Gove | **Department:** Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

The hon. Gentleman makes a good point, and it gives me an opportunity to thank the Holocaust Educational Trust, which enjoys support across the House. The work done by its chief executive, Karen Pollock, is exemplary. As the hon. Gentleman rightly points out, as the voices of survivors fade and the holocaust moves from memory to history, it is

vital that we ensure that every successive generation appreciates the unique evil of that event, the origins of antisemitism and the need to be vigilant against its recrudescence.

National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service

25 Sep 2023 | HL10220

Asked by: Baroness Deech

To ask His Majesty's Government what are the planned contents of each exhibition room in the proposed Holocaust Memorial Learning Centre in Victoria Tower Gardens.

Answering member: Baroness Swinburne | **Department:** Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

Cost estimates for excavation at the chosen site are commercially sensitive and not suitable for publication at this time. No estimates have been made for locating the Learning Centre at a hypothetical site.

Information about the Learning Centre's content was presented at the public inquiry and is available on the Westminster City Council website: westminster.gov.uk/sites/default/files/cd_8.9_proof_of_evidence_of_stephen_greenberg_1.pdf.

3.2

Debates

Holocaust Memorial Day

26 Jan 2023 | 726 cc1124-1274

Sajid David: That this House has considered Holocaust Memorial Day.

3.3

Statements

Speaker's Statement

26 Jan 2023 | 726 c1149

Before we start today's business, I want to note that tomorrow is Holocaust Memorial Day. I know the whole House will agree with me about the importance of remembering the 6 million Jewish people murdered during the holocaust, alongside the millions of other people killed as a result of Nazi persecution, as well as those killed in more recent genocides in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur. I know also that colleagues will want to join me in thanking the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust for the important work it does. This important event will be marked by a talk from survivors of the holocaust and of genocides in Darfur and Bosnia in Speaker's House at 1 pm today, and a ceremony in Portcullis House Atrium at 4.15 pm, at which you are all welcome.

3.4 Early Day Motions

Holocaust Memorial Day

269 (session 2023-24)

11 Jan 2024

Bob Blackman

That this House notes that on 27 January 2024 the UK will observe Holocaust Memorial Day on the anniversary of the liberation of the Nazi concentration and death camp Auschwitz-Birkenau; further notes that the UK will come together to remember the 6 million Jewish men, women and children who were murdered and the millions of other victims of Nazi persecution; pays tribute to the Holocaust survivors, including many who share their testimony day in, day out, to ensure the horrors of the past are never forgotten; thanks the Holocaust Educational Trust for its work to educate every person from every background in the UK about the Holocaust and its contemporary relevance; pays tribute to the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust for organising the national Holocaust Memorial Day event; and urges all Right hon. and hon. Members to observe this day and to pledge to speak out against antisemitism, which in recent months has risen exponentially and which needs to be tackled head on.

85th anniversary of Kristallnacht and antisemitism

33 (session 2023-24)

09 Nov 2023

Patricia Gibson

That this House commemorates the victims of Kristallnacht (Night of Broken Glass), a destructive campaign of violence against Jewish people, on its 85th anniversary; understands that, throughout the night of 9-10 November 1938, the Nazi Party targeted synagogues and Jewish prayer rooms across Germany, with over 1,400 burned or badly damaged, 7,500 Jewish businesses across Germany and Austria vandalised, and at least 91 people murdered, with a further 30,000 Jewish men being arrested and taken to concentration camps, where many more died; further understands that this was followed by hundreds of suicides in the Jewish community and mass emigration; recognises the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany's relaunched campaign, *ItStartedWithWords*, highlighting that the Holocaust did not start with camps, ghettos and deportations, but with words of hate; understands this campaign's importance in view of the growing prevalence of Holocaust denial and hate speech towards Jews; notes concerning reports that more than 1,000 anti-Semitic incidents have taken place across the UK since Hama's terrorist attacks on 7 October 2023, the highest 28-day total recorded since the Community Security Trust began tracking attacks in 1984, and a 537% increase over the same period in 2022; recognises the resilience of Holocaust survivors who continue to highlight the barbaric actions that took place during the Second World War, particularly following the unacceptable rise in antisemitism recently; and continues to remember the 6 million Jewish people and others targeted due to ethnicity, religion, political beliefs and sexual orientation who were victims of Nazi persecution.

Henry Wuga's 99th birthday

895 (session 2022-23)

23 Feb 2023

Kirsten Oswald

That this House sends its very best wishes to Henry Wuga MBE on the occasion of his 99th birthday; notes that he was born Heinz Wuga in Nuremberg in 1924 and was sent to Glasgow on the Kindertransport in 1939 at the age of only 15; understands that he had a long and successful career in the catering business; appreciates that in 1999 he was awarded an MBE for his work with limbless ex-servicemen; celebrates the magnificent contribution he has made to Holocaust Education in Scotland alongside his late wife Ingrid Wuga BEM, also a Kindertransport child; notes that thousands of children and young people have heard directly from Henry and Ingrid about their experiences of the Holocaust; further notes the profound impact this has had on so many people who have heard them; acknowledges the vital importance of testimony such as Henry's in ensuring a clear appreciation of what happened during the Holocaust and why it must never happen again; thanks him for his continued and tireless efforts in this regard; notes that his contributions

have made a significant difference to education in Scotland; and thanks him for his selfless work for others; and hopes that he has a wonderful birthday.

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Further reading

[Holocaust Memorial Day Trust \(HMDT\)](#)

Holocaust Memorial Day Trust (HMDT) is the charity established and funded by the UK Government to promote and support Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) in the UK.

HMD has taken place in the UK since 2001, with a UK Commemorative Ceremony and more than 10,000 local activities taking place all across the UK on or around 27 January each year.

The UK played a leading role in establishing HMD as an international day of commemoration in 2000, when 46 governments signed the [Stockholm Declaration](#).

The UK Government had responsibility for running HMD from 2001-2005, organised through the Home Office.

In May 2005 HMDT was registered as a charity (charity no: 1109348) and the Home Secretary appointed HMDT Trustees for the first time. The [professional team](#) started work in October 2005.

The [Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities](#) (previously Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government) has funded our work since 2007.

To date, we have overseen massive growth of local HMD activities. We have worked in partnership with many organisations to ensure the life stories of survivors are shared with hundreds of thousands of people.

In March 2023 we launched [Holocaust Memorial Day 2023 in Review](#), a publication summarising the work of HMDT in promoting and supporting Holocaust Memorial Day and setting out how we are achieving the five goals which guide our organisation.

With reflections on HMD across the UK, HMD 2023 projects, the UK Ceremony and more, this publication explores how thousands of people marked HMD 2023.

HMDT is governed by a [Board of Trustees](#), which is made up of a diverse range of individuals and organisations. Our Trustees set the strategic vision and have responsibility for the governance of the charity.

We are privileged that The former Prince of Wales is [Patron of HMDT](#).

The National Holocaust Centre and Museum

The National Holocaust Centre and Museum promotes an understanding of the roots of discrimination and prejudice, and the development of ethical values, leading to a greater understanding within society. The Centre uses the history of genocide as a model of how society can break down and emphasises how current and future generations must carefully examine and learn from these tragedies. The Centre promotes respect for human rights, equal opportunities and good citizenship, which has greater resonance than ever in our culturally diverse society.

International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance

The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance unites governments and experts to strengthen, advance and promote Holocaust education, research and remembrance and to uphold the commitments to the 2000 Stockholm Declaration.

The IHRA (formerly the Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research, or ITF) was initiated in 1998 by former Swedish Prime Minister Göran Persson. Today the IHRA's membership consists of 35 member countries, each of whom recognizes that international political coordination is imperative to strengthen the moral commitment of societies and to combat growing Holocaust denial and antisemitism.

The IHRA's network of trusted experts share their knowledge on early warning signs of present-day genocide and education on the Holocaust. This knowledge supports policymakers and educational multipliers in their efforts to develop effective curricula, and it informs government officials and NGOs active in global initiatives for genocide prevention.

UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation

The United Kingdom Holocaust Memorial is the UK's national establishment for remembrance of the Holocaust. It is dedicated to the 6 million Jewish men, women and children murdered in the Holocaust and all other victims of the Nazis and their collaborators.

The Memorial will stand as a reminder of the horrors of the past and will encourage reflection on their implications for British government and society, both at the time and subsequently. The view of Parliament from the Memorial will serve as a permanent reminder that political decisions have far-reaching consequences. By setting history's worst example of the disintegration of democratic values against the greatest emblem of Britain's aspirations for democracy, it will stand as a permanent

reminder of the responsibilities of citizens in a democracy to be vigilant and responsive whenever and wherever those values are threatened.

We seek to preserve the memory of the Holocaust whilst also considering its contemporary relevance. The Holocaust – the murder of Europe’s Jews by Nazi Germany and its collaborators – remains unsurpassed as a historical event in its aims and extent, yet the questions it raises have many echoes in the modern world, including (but not restricted to) subsequent genocides and the persistence of antisemitism.

Deeper understanding of the Holocaust, and of Britain’s responses to it, therefore prompts us to ask challenging questions about human behaviour and the world around us. The UK Holocaust Memorial will thus aim both to remember and to encourage reflection on the lessons of the past amongst all British citizens and visitors of all nationalities. In dedicating itself to this mission, Britain reaffirms its commitment to stand up against antisemitism, prejudice and hatred in all its forms

The Jewish Museum London

The Jewish Museum London was founded in 1932 by Professor Cecil Roth, Alfred Rubens and Wilfred Samuel. Originally located in Woburn House in Bloomsbury, it moved to an elegant early Victorian listed building in Camden Town in 1994.

The London Museum of Jewish Life was founded in 1983 as the Museum of the Jewish East End with the aim of rescuing and preserving the disappearing heritage of London’s East End – the heartland of Jewish settlement in Britain. While the East End has remained an important focus, the Museum expanded to reflect the diverse roots and social history of Jewish people across London, including the experiences of refugees from Nazism. It also developed an acclaimed programme of Holocaust and anti-racist education.

In 1995 the two Museums were amalgamated. Between 1995 and 2007 the combined Jewish Museum ran on two sites, but with a long term aim to find the means to combine the two collections, activities and displays within a single site.

Following years of planning and fundraising the Museum bought a former piano factory behind the Camden Town site and raised the required funds to combine and remodel the buildings. The new Museum opened to the public on 17 March 2010.

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