

Mayor, citizens of the town and honoured guests.

Dear Friends. We thank you for inviting us here to this land and place. We value your support and active participation in making this possible. This mission is so very important, it is a mission of humanity, friendship, peace, cooperation and our common determination to fulfil this “never again” promise.

70 years have passed since the Holocaust. The Holocaust refuses to become history. The question is why? There are a number of possible answers. The central answer in my eyes is that human kind refuses to understand how it was possible that ever advancing man could create such atrocious atrocities. Millions of people followed the evil Nazi-regime that wanted to obliterate the Jewish nation/people. However, the Jewish people fought for their lives and their human spirit. The righteous amongst the gentiles endangered their lives whilst saving Jewish ones. The Holocaust is not only a Jewish issue, it’s a universal issue.

We in Israel need to educate our children to humanism and they, in turn, will educate their children to humanism, a positive attitude, forming bonds and friendships and cooperation with one another. Especially in the light of the increase of world anti-Semitism.

The world needs to stand behind the declaration: “never again”. It’s no slogan, it has deep meaning and significance. We live in a time where world leaders need to actively work on that another Holocaust won’t happen. Not a Jewish Holocaust neither other people’s. The world needs to unite in this.

Today we will march with pride on German soil, we will wave Israeli flags with pride and we will fulfill the words of Donia Rosen, 12 years old, who wrote in her diary after the murder of her family:

“I want to ask of you that you don’t forget the dead. May you establish a memorial for us, not of marble or stone, but of good deeds. I believe wholeheartedly that only a feature such as this [memorial of good deeds] will promise a good future for you and your children, and then evil will not control the world and turn it into hell.”

We who live in the state of Israel, and one of its founding principles is the right of dignity and respect, need to translate this principle into actions. We who sing in our national anthem “to be a free nation in our land” must strengthen the principles of respect, charity and love of man.

We want to fulfil Donia’s request and work on a good future because we know our past. Let us create a future together by learning from the past and using our knowledge to build relationships and strengthen them and to develop a society with positive forces which will uproot the negative forces. We must remember that we are all people, that we the second and third generation from the Holocaust will always be humane and united.

Chani Rieger, Geislingen May 2015