



**International Holocaust Remembrance Day  
Ceremony 2025  
“Engaging Youth in Holocaust Remembrance”**

27 January 2025, Bern City Hall

27. January 2025

*Check against delivery*

**Dear Holocaust Survivors**

**President of the Swiss Federation of Jewish Communities**

**Excellencies**

**Ladies and gentlemen**

On 27 January 1945, Soviet troops liberated the Auschwitz extermination camp uncovering the horrors of the massacre that had taken place in such camps, ghettos and prisons as Nazi rule spread across Europe.

Today, 80 years on, we commemorate this day and rekindle the flame of remembrance. At the initiative of the World Jewish Congress, hundreds of parliaments worldwide, including twenty in Switzerland, are illuminated as a sign of solidarity and remembrance.

Ladies and gentlemen

In 2022, a UNESCO report showed that 17 per cent of content on TikTok relating to the Holocaust denied or distorted it. On X (Twitter), the figure was 19 per cent, and on Telegram, 50 per cent. A survey conducted by the Federal Statistical Office in 2020 showed that 39 per cent of Swiss people share anti-Semitic stereotypes. In 2022, 17 per cent of Swiss people reported having experienced racial discrimination in the last five years. That means one in six people in our country.



The illumination of our parliaments expresses not only the will to remember, but also underscores the need to harness this will with deeds. Because it is in parliaments that decisions are made. It is the job of politicians to take a stand against hate speech. It is the job of politicians to tighten laws that prohibit anti-Semitic acts, Holocaust denial and hate speech. They must promote educational projects that help young people understand the mechanisms of hatred and intolerance. The illumination of parliaments also serves as a reminder that there is still much to be done. And it is in parliaments that these measures can and must be initiated.

Ladies and gentlemen

In a few years, there will be no Holocaust survivors left to tell their stories. Our generation will bear sole responsibility for remembering and for ensuring that such horrors 'never again' come to pass. It is up to us to ensure that young people understand the history of the Holocaust. It is up to us to give them the tools to debunk stereotypes and hate speech. It is up to us to empower them to recognise the associated dangers. If young people are to be actively engaged, we need them to be actively informed and, above all, educated. Only then can the young create a future in which hate has no place. How else can we ensure that the horror of Auschwitz does not become their or our future? To shape the future, we must learn from the past.

This has been said and repeated often. And yet it remains our task to repeat this warning as long as hatred and rejection persist in our societies.

Thank you.