

JOINT PRESS RELEASE

International Holocaust Remembrance Day - Call for stronger commitment to fighting racism, anti-Semitism, discrimination and xenophobia

Brussels, 27 January 2015

On International Holocaust Remembrance Day, 70 years after the liberation of Auschwitz, civil society organisations working on anti-racism and anti-discrimination issues¹ are joining forces to raise awareness about this dark period of history and commemorate the victims of the genocide perpetrated by the Nazi regime against Jews, Roma, people with disabilities, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people and other groups that have been persecuted and deprived of their rights and dignity because they did not fit the Nazi ideology.

This Remembrance Day should not only commemorate those who died in this tragedy. The current rise of fear and hatred of others, far-right and xenophobic trends translating into anti-Gypsyism, anti-Semitism, homophobia, transphobia, Islamophobia and other discriminatory behaviours, are jeopardising the efforts undertaken to promote an inclusive and equal Europe. This is why we must continue to remember the devastating consequences of discrimination and continue to promote equality.

Taking a stand together to protect the rights of all citizens, regardless of their race, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender expression and/or gender identity is a daily struggle that we must continue to lead hand in hand. We therefore call on national governments as well as inter-governmental organisations, civil society organisations and individuals to join this struggle, to act and react to defend human rights and the values of democracy. It is the states' responsibility to protect our societies, to ensure protection of the human rights and the security of all citizens.

We call for a stronger commitment and action of the European Union, member states, institutions and civil society to fight racism, discrimination, far-right and xenophobic movements. It is imperative that decision-makers do everything possible to prevent such destruction and inhumanity from ever happening again.

¹ European Roma Information Office (ERIO), European Roma and Travellers Forum (ERTF), A Jewish Contribution to an Inclusive Europe (CEJI), Union of Jewish Students (EUJS), Decade of Roma Inclusion Secretariat Foundation, Inclusion Europe, European Disability Forum (EDF), International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer Youth and Student Organisation (IGLYO), European Network Against Racism (ENAR), International Roma Youth Network (TernYpe), European Region of the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA-Europe), René Cassin, European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC) and Roma Virtual Network (RVN)

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