

From the Website of the United Nations

Holocaust - Exhibition: The Girls of Room 28

EU/Israel/Czech Rep-sponsored exhibition "The Girls of Room 28" opens at *Palais des Nations* on International Holocaust Remembrance Day

27.01.2014



UN Photo/Jean-Marc Ferré

The EU-sponsored exhibition “**The Girls of Room 28 – In Remembrance of the Children of the Theresienstadt Ghetto**” opened on Monday, 27 January 2014, at the United Nations *Palais des Nations* in Geneva. Organised in partnership with the Permanent Missions of Israel and of the Czech Republic, this event marked the International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust and gathered close to two hundred people from diplomatic to non-governmental circles.

At the ceremony poignant speeches were given by UNOG Acting Director General Michael Moller, EU Ambassador Mariangela Zappia, Ambassadors Eviatar Manor from Israel and Katerina Sequensová from the Czech Republic and by Helga Pollak-Kinsky, Holocaust survivor, who had been deported in 1943 aged twelve to the Theresienstadt Ghetto and later to Auschwitz and whose story is told in the exhibition. The official part of the programme was concluded with the anthem, originally sung by the Girls of Room 28 and performed for the occasion by girls from the German School in Geneva.

"The exhibition is about the girls in the Theresienstadt concentration camp and their teachers", **Ambassador Zappia** said. Welcoming the memories transmitted in Ms Pollak-Kinsky's diary from Theresienstadt – published for the first time in German today - and other fragments collected by Hannelore Brenner-Wonschick, the curator of the exhibition, she praised the courage and foresight of the girls of Room 28 for passing on history to future generations and "*helping remind us today of the need to continue fighting prejudice, racism and any form of intolerance*".

"The prisoners' willingness to survive and keep faith in Theresienstadt, study and draw to show beauty beyond the life in the ghetto" should be admired said **Ambassador Manor**. The story of the Girls of Room 28 is one of "*hope, compassion and friendship, and of continued relevance regardless of the nationality and religion,*" **Ambassador Sequensová** added. **Ms Pollak-Kinsky** finally expressed her emotion and gratitude that, through the exhibition, justice was being done to all the children who did not survive Theresienstadt.

The exhibition will be displayed between 27 January and 11 February 2014 at the *Palais des Nations*, as part of the UN Cultural Activities Programme. Several activities will be held in parallel during the coming two days to mark the International Holocaust Remembrance Day, notably the official ceremony in the UN on January 28 at the Assembly Hall where Ms Pollak-Kinsky is delivering the survivor's testimony and a panel organised for the first time this year by the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.



Helga Pollak-Kinsky with UNOG Acting Director General Michael Moller and EU Ambassador Mariangela Zappia, January 27, 2014.

Additional Information on the exhibition: www.room28projects

Info on the Theresienstadt Diary of Helga Pollak-Kinsky: www.edition-room28.de