



Musée Holocauste Montréal  
Montreal Holocaust Museum

## Statement on International Holocaust Remembrance Day January 27, 2020

Today is a heartbreaking day of international mourning and commemoration. And it also serves as an ongoing reminder that every person, in every generation, has a duty to act, to stand up, and to speak out.

The Holocaust was a systematic, state-sponsored genocide perpetrated by a democratically elected government and executed with the voluntary participation of its citizens and collaborators. How is it possible that thousands and thousands of men and women of all ages and all backgrounds willingly committed atrocities, unimaginable acts of brutality, and mass murder? And how is it possible that millions more were spectators?

Hate may be the deadliest disease in history, and the virus seems to resist all treatments. Over 170 million men, women, and children were killed in war and genocide in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, more than all recorded history up until then. The Holocaust should have eradicated the virus of hate and its cruel manifestations, but new strains and outbreaks continue to emerge, and the best vaccine we have developed so far is education.

Every week, through our commemorative programs, testimonies, permanent collection, travelling exhibitions, and teaching tools, the Montreal Holocaust Museum educates and sensitizes thousands of students, teachers, and other visitors to the dangers of hate and indifference and to the need to promote understanding and respect for human rights and dignity.

Today Jewish Canadians represent less than 1% of the total population, yet 18-20% of all reported hate crimes in Canada target Jews. We call upon all citizens to join us in opposing antisemitism, racism, hate, and indifference. And we call upon political leaders and governments to elevate public discourse, support educational projects, ensure public safety and security, train law enforcement personnel, and address ongoing technological challenges to the prevention of incitement to hate.

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