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## Holocaust Education and Remembrance in Nepal

Three Cities, 25 Schools and One Common Message of Humanity and Interconnectedness

Press Statement – 27 January 2020

**EMBARGOED: 27 JANUARY 2020: 17:30 NEPAL TIME**

**Kathmandu, 27 January 2020:** With the support from the Government of Nepal Ministry of Education Science and Technology, the United Nations Nepal together with the Embassy of Germany, the Embassy of Israel and Delegation of the European Union to Nepal organized a month-long educational outreach program about Holocaust in 15 public and 10 private schools of Kathmandu, Bhaktapur and Lalitpur respectively.

“Understanding our history connects us to the essential human values of truth, respect, justice and compassion. As these values are still being threatened from all sides, we must reaffirm them more strongly than ever and stand every day and everywhere against antisemitism, bigotry and hatred of all kinds”, says the United Nations Resident Coordinator, Ms. Valerie Julliard.

This year marks both the 75th anniversary of the ending of the Second World War and the establishment of the United Nations. Acknowledging 2020 as the milestone year, the theme for Holocaust Remembrance Day is **“75 years after Auschwitz - Holocaust Education and Remembrance for Global Justice”**.

Resonating with the global theme, remembrance and education about the holocaust were at the center of the school outreach programme in Nepal. Various orientation sessions about the Holocaust were conducted amongst the students of higher secondary level as a part of their Social Studies curriculum benefiting around 500 students.

During the school outreach program students were briefed about the horrors that can emerge from discrimination and intolerance and were urged to stand for injustice and “never again” repeat the acts of genocide anywhere in the world.

“The purpose of this international day of remembrance is therefore not only to pay tribute to the victims of the Holocaust, but also to encourage us to learn from it so that such horror will never happen again. It's more important than ever at a time that we are witnessing a worrying revival of antisemitism, with social networks as its main vector, where anonymity and lack of control encourage all forms of hate speech and Holocaust denial”, says the Chargé d'affaires of the Delegation of the European Union to Nepal, Mr. Bashkim BITUCI.

In order to amplify the awareness about the holocaust, the UN and the three diplomatic missions mobilized 35 youth volunteers pursuing their bachelor's and master's degrees to facilitate the school outreach programs.

Prior to the school outreach program, the volunteers were briefed about the history of the holocaust over a period of three days. They also had the unique opportunity to interact with the



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UN Resident Coordinator, the Ambassadors of the German and Israel Embassies and the European Union Delegation to Nepal over a one on one Q & A session.

"One of the darkest realities in the history of mankind is the Holocaust. Since the theme this year is Holocaust education, together, we must educate our future generation and continue our fight against antisemitism, discrimination and intolerance. We must remember not to repeat the history itself. Our joint responsibility is not over yet." opined the Ambassador of Israel to Nepal, H.E. Mr. Benny Omer.

The month-long observation concluded with a memorial ceremony hosted by the German Ambassador, H.E. Mr. Roland Schafer. The memorial ceremony, attended by the representatives of the Nepali Government, the diplomatic community and civil society, the United Nations Resident Coordinator, Ms. Valerie Julliard and the Chargé d'affaires of the delegation of the European Union, Mr. Bashkim Bituci shared their remarks on the victims of the Holocaust. Likewise, H.E. Ambassador for Israel, Mr. Benny Omer, recited the Yizkor prayer in honor of all those who suffered during the Shoa.

After thanking the UN Volunteers for their work in the Nepali schools, H.E Mr Roland Schäfer added, "all democratic governments currently face the challenge to find the right balance between banning hateful content and preserving the freedom of speech. Anywhere, and in Nepal, governments are well advised to listen very carefully. Listen to the young people who need to be protected from discrimination and at the same time need to express their opinion freely. Listen to the experts who all over the world, work on carefully crafted laws and trying to protect citizens from both pitfalls."

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