

## Romania remembers its Holocaust

Written by B'nai B'rith Europe

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*Report by Jose Iacobescu. 12th October 2011*

... The commemoration of the Holocaust Day in Romania took place on 11th October 2011 at the Holocaust Memorial in the centre of Bucharest in the presence of numerous national and international notabilities.

After years of oscillation, indecision and controversial statements, in 2003 the Romanian authorities set up the Elie Wiesel International Commission for the Study of the Holocaust in Romania. Their final report on the sensitive matter of Romania's wartime history and recommendations for the future were all endorsed by the government in November 2004. As a result, Romania became a full member of the Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research in December 2004, at the second annual plenary meeting held under the Italian chairmanship in Trieste.

The Romanian Holocaust Memorial, designed by Peter Jacobi, was inaugurated in Bucharest on October 8, 2009. Recognising the particular importance of combating Anti-Semitism in all its forms, Romania has expressed its readiness to play a major regional role in raising awareness on its revival in Europe. As such, Romania took an active part in the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Conferences on Combating Anti-Semitism organised in Vienna (2003), Berlin (2004), Cordoba (2005), and Bucharest (2007) supporting the inclusion of non-discrimination and promotion of mutual respect and understanding as priorities on the OSCE agenda.

Speakers at this year's ceremony included the ambassadors of Israel, of USA, of Germany, of France and of the Czech Republic. Wreaths were laid at the Memorial by the President of Romania, by various Ministers, by B'nai B'rith and by the Federation of Jewish Communities.



At a separate solemn ceremony in the Romanian Parliament speakers included Roberta Anastase, President of the Romanian Chamber of Deputies, Aurel Vainer, President of the Romanian Federation of Jewish Communities, Alexandru Florian, General Manager of the Elie Wiesel Institute, Liviu Beris, President of the Association of Romanian Jewish Victims of the

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Holocaust. The ceremony concluded with a minute of silence dedicated to the memory of over 300,000 Romanian and Ukrainian Jews murdered in Romania and Transnistria.

During this solemn ceremony held at the Romanian Parliament dedicated to this Commemoration, the Chamber of Deputies adopted a Declaration that among others, reiterates the decision to act in a conjugate and relentless way, by the well known ways and means of the parliamentary life, for such tragedies do not happen again, never and nowhere.

The Romanian Deputies reiterate their commitment for further supporting, by legislative and institutional means, the actions against any manifestations of anti-semitism and xenophobia, of intolerance and racial discrimination.