



Remembering the Holocaust reminds us that our societies still have lessons to learn and more work to do to counter prejudice, anti-Semitism and xenophobia was the main message at the 22 January meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council, which was dedicated to commemorating International Holocaust Remembrance Day (27 January).

The tragedy of the Holocaust must never be forgotten. The process of remembering those terrible events and commemorating the victims helps foster mutual respect among people of different faiths and religions, as well as a deeper and more sympathetic understanding of our differences. This in turn, it was stressed, helps build more just societies.

Addressing the Permanent Council, Sir Andrew Burns, Chair of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), said: "By educating the generations to come, we ensure that the Holocaust, and its victims, do not fade into the past but remain an ever present reminder of what can happen when societies allow their political life to be coarsened by racial and religious hatred."

Ambassador Roksanda Ninčić, State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia and Head of the Serbian Delegation to the IHRA, said that Serbia, along with other members and observers of the IHRA, is committed to remembering and honouring the victims of the Holocaust, and to combatting anti-Semitism, racism and prejudice against Roma and Sinti.

"Combating all types of extremism and intolerance on the national as well as on the international level should start by remembrance of the past because it's our legacy to future generations, but also a lesson about our experiences and their consequences," she said.

Ninčić added that Serbia, as OSCE Chairmanship in 2015, will work with the Organization and its international partners to enhance efforts to combat anti-Semitism.

Following the meeting of the Permanent Council, the Israeli Embassy in Vienna presented an interactive exhibition, "A Monument of Good Deeds – Dreams and Hopes of Children during the Holocaust," dedicated to the children who perished in the Holocaust and their legacies.

*Photo by:OSCE/Vera Djemelinskaia* 