



# THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

335 East 45<sup>th</sup> Street, New York, N.Y. 10017  
Tel (212) 439-4000, Fax (212) 986-1083

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**Statement by H.E. Ambassador SHIN Kak-soo**  
**Deputy Permanent Representative**

**Plenary Session of the General Assembly**

**Item 72: Holocaust Remembrance**

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**New York**

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Mr. President,

1. Let me begin by joining other delegations in expressing our deepest sympathy for the millions of victims of the Holocaust, who were murdered for their ethnic origins, religious faith or political beliefs during World War II, and in condemning in the strongest possible terms the horrific, inhuman crimes against humanity committed by the Nazi regime.

2. It goes without saying that such a horrendous tragedy should never be allowed to recur. To our dismay, however, we cannot deny that even today we are witnesses to many genocides and crimes against humanity, from Srebrenica to Kigali to Darfur. These recent genocides and crimes against humanity, still fresh in our memory, compel the international community to redouble its efforts towards realizing a reliable and effective security system that deters such heinous crimes and promotes mutual understanding and tolerance among ethnicities, races, cultures and nations.

3. It was with these solemn obligations in mind that Member States of the United Nations convened a special session of the General Assembly early this year. On that occasion, Member States committed themselves to doing their utmost to prevent the recurrence of such a calamity, while remembering and drawing lessons from the Holocaust and paying their respect to its victims.

Mr. President,

4. My delegation would like to take this opportunity to emphasize the importance of what we achieved regarding the responsibility to protect in the Outcome Document adopted at the World Summit in September. The Leaders of Member States agreed on the collective responsibility of the international community to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity when national authorities manifestly fail to do so. The faithful, swift and effective implementation of this responsibility to protect will help to prevent, deter and halt the outbreak of such

situations. My delegation earnestly hopes that serious efforts will be made to carry forward this important development as the follow-up to the World Summit.

Mr. President,

5. As a country that suffered greatly from atrocities committed during World War II, the Republic of Korea has decided to co-sponsor the draft resolution on Holocaust remembrance. We believe that declaring January 27 an annual International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust is a good way to ensure that the Holocaust's dreadful lessons are not forgotten. We cannot allow the memory of these crimes to fade with the passage of time.

6. We also believe strongly that any attempt to deny the Holocaust as a historical reality, in full or in part, must be rejected. It takes courage to tell the truth about the past when that truth is painful or even shameful. For many survivors of these crimes against humanity, it took years for them to recover the strength to tell their stories — stories which are now indelibly inscribed in our collective memory. This has been true as well for many of the Korean victims who suffered most severely during World War II. We cannot build a positive, sustainable future if we turn a blind eye to our painful past. As has often been said, those who ignore the lessons of history are doomed to repeat it. Facing up to the truth about history and learning its lessons are not a choice but an obligation.

7. In this regard, we strongly support the draft resolution's recommendation to develop educational programmes that will teach the lessons of the Holocaust to future generations. It is the collective obligation of humanity to promote education and tolerance so that there will never again be a similar tragedy. We hope that this education will consist of more than a ritualized litany of horrors. Instead, future generations must be taught about this chapter in history in a way that enables them to understand how it happened and prevent its recurrence.

Mr. President,

8. The Republic of Korea is firmly committed to upholding the dignity of all human beings and to respecting human rights for all. We pledge our unwavering support for the efforts of the United Nations to protect and promote the fundamental human rights and dignity of all humanity. Although it is too late for the millions of victims of the Holocaust and other crimes against humanity during World War II and since, we should work as hard as we can to ensure that human rights are respected and secure for future generations. It is our deepest wish that through the teaching of truth and the fostering of tolerance, our children will grow up in a new world free from the traumas and tragedies of the century we have so recently left behind.

Thank you.