

A statement by Australian Holocaust survivors

We, the undersigned Holocaust survivors are the last witnesses to the unspeakable horrors of the Nazi regime. We are witnesses to the antisemitic propaganda that turned our friends, neighbours and the general public against us in Europe. We remember the six million Jewish lives lost because of this hatred.

On 7 October 2023, we witnessed the horrors of Hamas' terrorist attacks in Israel and the resulting war, with its terrible loss of life. Since then, we have seen an unprecedented outpouring of antisemitism raging on our streets, on our television screens, on social media and in our universities.

We write this letter now because today marks 85 years since Kristallnacht (The Night of Broken Glass). On 9 November 1938, the Nazi regime murdered Jews and attacked Jewish life, wreaking terror and burning synagogues.

Rather than condemn these atrocities, the world stood by and watched.

Never have we, the survivors of the Holocaust felt the need to make a collective statement such as this until now. Never did we think that we would witness a re-enactment of the senseless and virulent hatred of Jews that we faced in Europe. The actions of Hamas are so familiar, so barbaric, yet instead of condemning this, the response across the globe is a shameful spike in antisemitism.

Our memories and our experiences in ghettos, concentration camps and in hiding - seeing our families and communities vanish - compel us to raise our voices and implore humanity to reject hatred, bigotry and violence. To recognise the agenda of Hamas, condemn it accordingly and call for the immediate release of all hostages - men, women, babies and the elderly.

We cannot allow history to repeat itself.

In the face of adversity, we have learned the importance of resilience, unity, and hope. We believe in the power of education and remembrance to prevent the atrocities of the past from occurring again. Together, we can strive for a world where every individual, regardless of their faith, regardless of their cultural background, can live in peace and security.

Antisemitism is one of the world's oldest and most contagious viruses. We ask all Australians to denounce the antisemitism and hatred that we see today in our beautiful country and across the globe.

We ask you to stand with us.

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