

Israel Marks Holocaust Remembrance Day

✖ **April 21, 2009** – Israel officially began its annual Holocaust Remembrance Day observances on Monday evening as the nation paused to remember the 6 million Jews who perished in the Nazi genocide between 1933-1945.

Opening ceremonies at the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial in Jerusalem and were broadcast live. The ceremony marks one of the few occasions when Israel's president (currently Shimon Peres) and prime minister (newly-installed Benjamin Netanyahu) appear at the same event.

In his speech, Peres emphasized that the appearance of Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad at the Durban II conference in Geneva just hours earlier was "a deplorable disgrace... [that] constitutes an acceptance of racism, rather than the fight against it." Netanyahu then vowed that Israel "will not let the Holocaust deniers perpetrate another holocaust on the Jewish people."

A two-minute siren was to sound on Tuesday at 10 a.m. and all traffic was to come to a stop nationwide for a moment of silence. The theme of this year's ceremonies at Yad Vashem is "Children in the Holocaust" – a focus on the tens of thousands survivors in Israel today who were still children when liberated at the end of World War II.