

Yad Vashem Chairman Urges Christian World to Keep Holocaust Remembrance Day

In his first appearance before an exclusively Christian audience as the new Chairman of Yad Vashem, Mr. Dani Dayan this week urged the Christian world to turn International Holocaust Remembrance Day every Jan. 27 into a special day to reflect on the Holocaust, honor its victims, pray and fight antisemitism today.

“For each decent person in the world, January 27th should not be a regular day. January 27th should be a day of reflection ... a day of prayer ... a day of meditation on how to honor the victims, how to improve combatting antisemitism and how to strengthen the relationship with the Jewish people and the state of Israel,” said Mr. Dayan. “All the things I said are good 365 days per year, but January 27th now has a special significance. So, I call upon all our viewers, when they wake up on January 27, don’t make it a regular day. Make it a day of reflection, a day of prayer, a day of faith, a day of solidarity with the victims, with the Jewish people and with the state of Israel, and a day to combat antisemitism.”

Dayan appeared Tuesday at the annual Envision leadership conference organized by the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem, which this year has brought together nearly 1,000 Christian pastors and ministry leaders from more than 50 nations for a month-long online event.

In 2006, Yad Vashem entered a special partnership with the ICEJ to open a unique outreach to the Christian world by launching the “Christian Friends of Yad Vashem” initiative. As part of that cooperative effort, the ICEJ organizes an annual pastors conference during the week of January 27th, which aims

to better educate Christian pastors and ministry leaders on the Holocaust and the need to stand with Israel today. Because of coronavirus travel restrictions, this year's conference is a fully online streaming event, with nearly 1,000 pastors and ministry leaders from around the world taking part.

In his live-streamed interview with ICEJ President Dr. Jürgen Bühler, Chairman Dayan added: "We extremely cherish our friendship with the Christian world, with you personally and with your Embassy. For us it is a source really of inspiration and encourages us very much knowing that we have partners in our mission.

"I think that Yad Vashem should be open and receive with open arms every person of goodwill that wants really to come here to learn and to understand and to mourn also, and to identify with the plight of the Jewish people," Dayan continued. "We feel without any reservation the sincerity of the feelings with which our Christian friends come here to Yad Vashem. And it's clear that in today's world, we see the Christian world as an ally and a friend. And we call upon all your audience, first and foremost, to visit Israel, when I hope that COVID will disappear soon, and to visit Jerusalem and to visit Yad Vashem. I think that for many persons, I hear it constantly, the visit to Yad Vashem has been a life-changing experience. I think it is an educational one, but no less than that it also is a spiritual one. I believe that the Hall of Names or the Righteous of the Nations path are some of the most sacred places in Jerusalem. You know that sacred places are abundant [here]. But I think those are more than sacred places of Jerusalem that every person of faith should visit."

"I can absolutely agree to that," Dr. Bühler responded. "The fact that I'm here now for 27 years in Israel, to a very large degree I owe to my first visit at Yad Vashem. Visiting the exhibition to see what Christians, what Germans did to the Jewish people, that really touched my heart in an incredible way."

Dayan was appointed in August 2021 as the new Chairman of Yad Vashem, the World Holocaust Remembrance Center. He previously served as Israel's Consul General in New York, as Chairman of the YESHA Council and as Chairman and CEO of Elad Software Systems Ltd., a company he founded. {eoa}

David Parsons *is VP and senior spokesman for the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem. Since 2006, the ICEJ has partnered with the Christian Friends of Yad Vashem to improve Holocaust education within the church and to fight modern-day antisemitism.*

Read articles like this one and other Spirit-led content in our new platform, CHARISMA PLUS.