

THE MESSAGE OF H.E. FOREIGN MINISTER JÁNOS MARTONYI
(Budapest, January 18, 2012)

Honourable Community gathered here today for remembrance,

On the 67th anniversary of the liberation of the ghetto in Budapest I am deeply moved in paying tribute to the victims of the Holocaust, and sharing with you in the pain of remembering.

The Shoah is still an open wound in Hungarian history. As the Foreign Minister of this country, it is especially difficult for me to admit that during this time of terror the Hungarian state failed to protect its citizens who, as a result, lost not only the country in which they were born but, having been deprived of their Hungarian identity and human dignity, their own fate as well.

While respectfully bowing our heads to the memory of the victims, we do hope and believe that today, more than six decades after the horrors of the Holocaust, the members of the diverse Jewish community in Hungary can live their everyday lives strengthened in their souls and proud of their identity.

This year on the 100th anniversary of his birth we remember Raoul Wallenberg, the Swedish diplomat who saved human lives, who during the time of barbarity and dread, along with a handful of aides, took a firm stand for life, offering encouragement and resilience, humanity and hope to those persecuted. His uncompromising actions, faithful to the commandment of the paramount respect for life have set a high standard and example to be followed by all of us. I am convinced that the Wallenberg Year in Hungary will provide an opportunity for a thorough study of the time of terror, dignified remembrance, and also the examination of responsibility.

History teaches us that social renewal is inconceivable without turning to one another and sharing our experiences, without understanding and dialogue. I do believe that remembering is at the same time the cleansing of the soul which helps coming to terms with our grave historical heritage and in which all of us will find consolation.

Remembering the victims, I recall the eternal lines of our national hero, Hanna Szenes who died a martyr's death:

*My God, My God, I pray that these things never end:
The sand and the sea,
The rush of the waters,
Lightening of the Heavens,
The prayer of Man.*

May their memory be blessed forever.

זכרונום לברכה!

János Martonyi