

**Statement von Dvir Aviam Ezra**  
**bei der Zentralen Gedenkveranstaltung im Bundestag**  
**am Volkstrauertag, 15. November 2020**

I am Dvir Aviam. I am an Israeli, Jewish, and an activist, but most importantly, the grandson of three holocaust survivors, who have experienced the horrors of war in Poland, Italy, and Bulgaria.

When my grandparents arrived in Israel, they would have never thought of their grandson speaking in the German Parliament one day. That alone testifies the progress being made in the last 70 years. A progress that has allowed our nations to reproach and established friendly relations. While the European Union and Israeli-German friendship were unthinkable 70 years ago, they are today's cornerstones of continued Peace in Europe and beyond.

*"Peace is not only the absence of war. It is a matter of thought, trust, and justice."*

These words by the Jewish philosopher Spinoza should remind us of our work not being complete.

All of us are aware that preventing war and committing to peaceful coexistence is a matter of consistent dedication and hard work. I am thankful to those German people, activists, and governments from Adenauer to the current administration who took great efforts to promote dialogue and reconciliation.

The past can only be remembered in dignity when we continue to follow this challenging but peace-rewarding path of democracy, human rights, and global justice.

What happened in the holocaust was unthinkable, even by the then existing standards. However, it was allowed to happen since too many people stayed silent and indifferent when political institutions failed to protect the Jewish, Roma, homosexuals, and other minorities. The horrifying anti-Semitic attack in Halle, as well as the rise of new, national identitarian movements in Germany and Europe, echo those dark times.

*Today*, we should remember that our shared duty is to stay vigilant against racism, intolerance, and hate.

We owe it to the victims of the past and our children's present and future to care for those *in need*. We *must* help the victims of war and discrimination and we *need* to protect the diversity of religions and cultures.

We *have to* think and act *differently* from past mistakes *if we want to make a difference* in our world!

The main lesson of our history is to be appreciative of one another, to be thankful and curious towards diversity.

The progress of Peace depends on our devotion and commitment to humanity as a whole.

Today, as a Jew addressing the German nation, I *chose* to honor my family's history by thinking different from the perpetrators. I *chose* to be open-minded and open-hearted for a future, which we shall continue to build together in the name of solidarity.