

Ron Prosor, Israel Ambassador to UN, Speech to General Assembly International Holocaust Remembrance Day, January 27, 2012



I, **Ron Prosor**, stand before you today as the child of **Uri Prosor**, who fled Nazi Germany when a Jewish state was still a dream – and the father of **Lior, Tomer and Oren Prosor**, for whom that dream is a vivid reality.

I see many from my father's generation here today, some who survived death camps and death marches; who saw the unimaginable and still had the hope to imagine a brighter future; who endured the unspeakable and still had the courage to speak out for others. I am honored – truly honored – to be in your presence.

I see some from my children's generation here. Today is about you. It is to you, and your children, that we extend a sacred promise during this week of commemoration at the United Nations.

Today I hear the voice of a 12-year-old girl named **Donia Rosen**, who hid in the forests of Poland after the Nazis murdered her entire family. She wrote in her diary on June 23, 1943: "I ask you not to forget the dead. Establish a memorial to us... a statue not of marble and not of stone, but of good deeds."

Donia's words echo in these halls of the United Nations, which were built in the wake of the Holocaust. On this day of commemoration, I say to my UN colleagues and to all the distinguished people gathered here: the commitment of "Never Again" must be universal. It extends to each and every one of you. And ladies and gentleman, we have much work to do.

In our world today, state-sponsored anti-Semitism persists, hate fills children's textbooks, and spiritual and religious leaders incite violence and racism.

We live in a world that saw the atrocities of Auschwitz and Birkenau, only to have then witnessed the killing fields of Cambodia, the genocide in Rwanda and the ongoing massacres in Darfur.

In this hall of the General Assembly – at the very podium where I stand today – Iran's **Mahmoud Ahmadinejad** stands every year and shamelessly denies the Holocaust, while his government threatens to carry out another one.

Our duty is clear. It is not enough to be good. We must know what to do when we face evil. It is not enough to know what we stand for, we must know what we stand against. It is not enough to educate our own children about tolerance. We must lift the crippling burden of hate from all children in the world.

This week we have heard many powerful stories of children who lived during the Holocaust. One of those children is **Petr Ginz** – a brilliant writer and an artist. He yearned to explore the universe and discover its truths, drawing a landscape of the moon well before man had laid eyes on it. I have a copy of the picture that he drew in Terezín with me today. Let me hold it up for all of you to see.

Today I ask you to think of all the works of art that were never made, all the ideas that were never known, and all the cures that were never found.

The scale of destruction is incomprehensible. Look at one child, and multiply by a million and a half. Look at a member of your own family and multiply by six million. Just try to imagine! Yet, there is something even greater than that unbearable loss: the Jewish people's determination to endure and rebuild.

We are a nation of survivors. The State of Israel is a living, breathing symbol of survival.

And although Petr's life was cut short in the gas chambers of Auschwitz, his dreams have never died. A copy of his picture traveled with the first Israeli astronaut, Col. Ilan Ramon, on his journey into space on the Colombia shuttle – a mission that ended in tragedy.

From the depths of Auschwitz, to the outer reaches of space, to the halls of the United Nations, the journey of Petr's drawing embodies the resilience of our people. It lives on.

And on this day of commemoration, as a representative of the Jewish state among the nations of the world, I am so proud to say: **Am Yisrael Chai! The People of Israel will live on.**