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Construction of the Shoah Wall of Names Memorial in Ostarrichi Park commences

National Council President Sobotka: “Whoever does not face up to history, history will face”

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GEDENKSTÄTTE FÜR DIE IN DER SHOAH ERMORDETEN
JÜDISCHEN KINDER, FRAUEN UND MÄNNER

Representatives of federal and provincial politics as well as of the National Fund and the Jewish Community of Vienna met today, Monday, on the grounds of Vienna's Ostarrichi Park in front of the Austrian National Bank to mark the start of construction of the Shoah Memorial Wall. Among them were National Council President Wolfgang Sobotka, Minister of the Chancellery Karoline Edtstadler, Vienna City Councilor for Culture Veronica Kaup-Hasler, the Secretary General of the National Fund Hannah Lessing and the President of the Jewish Community Vienna Oskar Deutsch. In their speeches they emphasized, among other things, Austria's historical responsibility for the Shoah and reaffirmed once more the importance of commemorating the victims and an active remembrance policy.

“When Kurt Tutter asked me in March 2018, I assumed the honorary patronage of the Shoah Wall of Names Memorial with deepest conviction and a clear stance: Whoever does not face up to history, history will face. This memorial wall returns identities to the 64,259 Jewish children, women and men who lived in Austria and were murdered in the Shoah. Their names carved in stone ensure that they will never be forgotten”, says Wolfgang Sobotka, President of the National Council.

“The Wall of Names Memorial is intended to remind us of the names of more than 64,000 victims of the Shoah and thus of the darkest chapter in our history. In the future we will be judged by what we do today to create a society free of anti-Semitism and racism. For it is our responsibility and duty not only to look back into the past in our daily lives and in remembrance, but also to combat anti-Semitism in all its forms today,” stated Karoline Edtstadler, Minister for the Chancellery.

“I am delighted that we are able to break ground today on an important remembrance project. The location in Ostarrichi Park for the name walls has been well chosen; it is close to the center, visible from afar and frequented by different generations. Holocaust monuments and memorials are not only important symbols for surviving eyewitnesses, but also for future generations. They contribute to the confrontation with our history, especially with the most shameful part of our past, make us aware of it and thus keep the memory alive. I would like to thank Kurt Tutter for his initiative and dedication”, emphasized Vienna's City Councilor for Culture Veronica Kaup-Hasler.

“The Wall of Names Memorial will be an important place to reflect on what happened in the past and developments in the present. However, remembrance is not only about learning from history so as not to repeat it, it is also about the responsibility that derives directly from it, namely to promote the precious commodity of Jewish life, which is blossoming again, and to understand it as an integral part of Austria”, said Oskar Deutsch, President of the Jewish Community Vienna.

The Shoah Wall of Names Memorial is intended to provide a central and quiet place where the fate of the more than 64,000 murdered people can be remembered and their lives honored. On the initiative of the Austrian Holocaust survivor Kurt Yakov Tutter and the Association for the Creation of a Shoah Wall of Names Memorial, the implementation of this important remembrance project was able to be commenced in 2018. It is majority funded by the Federal Government, following a commitment by Federal Chancellor Sebastian Kurz in 2018. In addition, the Federal Provinces and the Federation of Austrian Industry have contributed to the realization of the project.

The National Fund has been in contact with Kurt Yakov Tutter since 1997 and also accompanied the construction of the Shoah Wall of Names. For Hannah Lessing, Secretary General of the National Fund, the new memorial is an important place of remembrance, also because of her grandmother, who was murdered in Auschwitz: “The Shoah Wall of Names will be a place for families to commune with their murdered loved ones – and a place to encounter history for all people in Austria”.

More information about the Shoah Name Walls Memorial can be found in the attached factsheet or on the Internet at .