

2013 Northern Ireland Holocaust Commemoration

28 January 2013

Newtownards, NORTHERN IRELAND: Holocaust Memorial Day is the International Day of Remembrance for the victims of the Holocaust and of the genocides in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur. The theme for 2013, chosen by the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust, is “Build a Bridge – Communities Together”.

The commemoration was arranged by The Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister (OFMdFM) and held at the Queen’s Hall, Newtownards.

The Mayor of Newtownards – Alderman Hamilton Gregory welcomed the packed auditorium with OFMdFM Junior Ministers Jonathan Bell MLA and Jennifer McCann MLA providing the address.



(R-L): Dr Christopher Stange – Hon. Consul for St. Vincent and the Grenadines to Northern Ireland & Chair (Ag.) African Caribbean Support Organisation Northern Ireland, John O' Doherty, Inge Radford who lit the candle of remembrance, OFMdFM Junior Ministers Jonathan Bell MLA and Jennifer McCann MLA, Dr Wasif Naeem, Linda Patterson, pupils from Millisle Primary School and Tracey Auld

Dr Christopher Stange - Hon. Consul of St. Vincent and the Grenadines to Northern Ireland and Chair (Ag.) of the African Caribbean Support Organisation Northern Ireland (ACSONI) read a 'Statement of Commitment', from the Declaration of the Stockholm Forum on Holocaust Education, on behalf of the Caribbean and African Diaspora in Northern Ireland.

The keynote speaker was Marilyn Taylor, author of "Far Away Home" with local broadcaster Paul Clark as Master of Ceremonies. Children from primary schools in Donaghadee and Millisle read excerpts from "Far Away Home" and sang the specially commissioned song "Bridge of Voice".

The ceremony concluded by lighting the Candle of Remembrance by Inge Radford, Hebrew prayer for the Repose of Souls of the Departed sung by Cantor Schulman and read in English by Gerald Steinberg.

Dr Stange commented: "I would like to commend the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister and the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust for this annual event which serves as a stark reminder to all of us of the evils of discrimination and prejudice if left unchecked. Tonight is a reminder to continue to stand firm against discrimination."

ENDS

Notes for Editor:

- Holocaust Memorial Day in Northern Ireland was initiated in 2000 to remember the victims and survivors of the Holocaust and to raise awareness and understanding of the events of the Holocaust and subsequent genocides as a continuing issue for all humanity.
- The date, 27 January, was chosen as it was the date of the liberation of the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp in 1945.
- The Declaration of the Stockholm Forum on Holocaust Education was signed by 44 governments from around the world.
- St Vincent and the Grenadines and Israel established Diplomatic relations in 1981.