

# WALLENBERG YEAR 2012

UNDER THE PATRONAGE OF  
H.E. MR. JÁNOS ÁDER, PRESIDENT OF HUNGARY



100 CENTENNIAL  
HUNGARY  
RAOUL WALLENBERG  
(1912-?)

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MAN AMIDST INHUMANITY

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## **RAOUL WALLENBERG – MAN AMIDST INHUMANITY**

Raoul Wallenberg, descendant of a Swedish trading family, arrived in the Hungarian capital after the German occupation of Hungary, in July 1944, four months after the German troops had marched into the country, just at the time when Governor Miklós Horthy – ceding to significant international and Church pressure – had the deportation of the Jews stopped. The temporary improvement in the political climate was favourable for saving human lives in which the Swedish diplomat took part right away. As soon as in August, he issued 4500 protective passports, convincing the Hungarian authorities to accept them as “family documents”, thus every issued document could save the life of several persons. From the very beginning, he cooperated efficiently with the Red Cross, with the diplomats of neutral states and with his Hungarian helpers. Though the situation in Hungary took a dramatic turn after Horthy’s unsuccessful attempt to exit from the war, with the Arrow Cross Party’s coup, the rescuers – and among them the more and more important Raoul Wallenberg – did not give up: they continued to save the lives of the continuously menaced tens of thousands, often risking their own lives. While rescuing the lives of people from the Nazis, Wallenberg could not imagine that in just a couple of weeks he would become the victim of another oppressive regime. On 17 January 1945, the Soviet troops carried him away, and he would never return from the Soviet Union.

Raoul Wallenberg is a symbolic figure of rescuers in Hungary and in Europe in his time. A “Man amidst inhumanity” fighting the horrors of the Holocaust. Hungary values highly and treasures the memory of the martyr Swedish diplomat. To honour the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his birth, the Government of Hungary has decided to declare the year 2012 as Wallenberg Year and to set up a Commemorative Committee. Our purpose was to pay tribute to his human greatness, and also to commemorate all those who saved lives together with him or similarly to him, amidst the inhumanity of oppressive regimes. This anniversary offers a good opportunity to draw lessons from the past, to review, in their light, current human rights and minority issues, and to address the future and the young generations.

In the programmes of the Raoul Wallenberg Year we shall present Raoul Wallenberg, the diplomat and man, and his partner rescuers, helpers in Hungary, the conditions of the rescue, the dangers of exclusion and discrimination. Doing so, we intend to draw attention to the importance of the protection of human rights and of having the courage of defending our long-standing values. The events of the past, their impact on the present and their lessons for today will be made tangible for all generations and all visitors in 2012 by exhibitions, conferences, concerts, competitions, meetings with witnesses and Hungarian Righteous Among the Nations.

Zsolt Németh  
Wallenberg Commemorative Committee, Chairman

## **THE WALLENBERG YEAR IN HUNGARY: GOALS**

Raoul Wallenberg, honorary citizen of Budapest, rescuer of tens of thousands of Hungarians, would be one hundred years in 2012. The Swedish diplomat and rescuer has received the “Righteous Among the Nations” award from the State of Israel upon the recommendation of the Yad Vashem Institute, has been bestowed with an honorary citizenship of the United States of America and is remembered in Canada by the annual Raoul Wallenberg Day. His fate has not been clarified reassuringly, although he most probably fell victim to the Stalinist terror. He is a “knight of humanism”, who is respected not only in his native country, but also in Hungary, Israel and all over the world.

**The Hungarian Government accepted a resolution on 3 November 2011 in which it declares the year 2012 as Wallenberg Year. The President of Hungary, H.E. Mr. Pál Schmitt took on the Patronage of the Centennial. A Commemorative Committee has been set up to oversee the preparations of the Year.**

On the occasion of the centennial, it is important for **Hungary to remember Raoul Wallenberg appropriately**. The commemorations in Hungary may contribute to

- paying tribute to the greatness Raoul Wallenberg demonstrated by his actions;
- moving closer to clarifying Wallenberg’s fate;
- commemorating the horrors of the Holocaust;
- exposing the crimes of National Socialism and Communism;
- commemorating the rescuers, finding out about their role more in detail;
- conveying, on the basis of lessons of the past, values for the future to our citizens and especially the younger generations; supporting the idea of tolerance and peaceful coexistence;
- discussing current human rights and minority issues;
- further strengthening of European integration and transatlantic relations based on common values.

## WALLENBERG COMMEMORATIVE COMMITTEE

### **Chairman:**

Zsolt NÉMETH, Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

### **Co-chairman:**

Karin OLOFSDOTTER, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Sweden

### **Members:**

Zoltán BALOG, Minister of State for Social Inclusion, Ministry of Justice and Public Administration

András BALOGH, Vice-President, Hungarian Socialist Party

Szabolcs BIHARI, President, Association of the Hungarians in Sweden

János FÓNAGY, Minister of State, Ministry for National Development

Ágnes GAVALLÉRNÉ KANCSAL, Director, Raoul Wallenberg Secondary and Vocational School

Gábor GORDON, President, March of the Living Foundation

István GYARMATI, President, Centre for Democracy Public Foundation

Rita IZSÁK, Director, Tom Lantos Institute

Tibor KERTÉSZ, Member of the Board, Electrolux

Katrina LANTOS SWETT, Director, Tom Lantos Foundation for Human Rights and Justice

Ilan MOR, Ambassador of the State of Israel

Mihály NAGY, Advisor, Ministry for National Resources

Ferenc OROSZ, Chairman, Raoul Wallenberg Foundation

Gergely PRÓHLE, Deputy Secretary of State, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

András SCHIFFER, Fraction Leader, Politics Can Be Different

Mária SCHMIDT, Director General, House of Terror Museum

György SZABÓ, President, Public Foundation for Hungarian Jewish Heritage

László SZÁSZFALVI, Minister of State for Church, Minority and Non-governmental Relations, Ministry of Justice and Public Administration

Szabolcs SZITA, Executive Director, Holocaust Memorial Center

János TAKÁCS, President of the Swedish Chamber of Commerce

László TÓKÉS, Vice President, European Parliament

Miklósné VÁLI, Wallenberg's colleague once, saved by him

Louise VON DARDEL, member of the Wallenberg family, Honorary Member of the International Raoul Wallenberg Foundation

Josef WEISS, Honorary Consul of Hungary, Jerusalem, Israel

Carl Michael L. WERNSTEDT, member of the Wallenberg family

### **Secretary:**

Anna MIKLÓS, Joint Cabinet for the Minister and the Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

**WALLENBERG YEAR**

**CALENDAR OF EVENTS IN HUNGARY**

17 JANUARY

**OPENING CEREMONY OF THE RAOUL WALLENBERG YEAR**

**OPENING OF THE SWEDISH EXHIBITION:**

**“FOR ME THERE IS NO OTHER CHOICE – RAOUL WALLENBERG 1912 – 2012”**

SPRING

**“IT WAS A LONG TIME AGO – WHERE WAS IT?”, COMPETITION IN CITY KNOWLEDGE**

15 APRIL

**MARCH OF THE LIVING**

15 APRIL

**WALLENBERG MEMORIAL CONCERT**

14 MAY

**ISSUING OF WALLENBERG STAMP**

15 MAY

**SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE: “CAN WE SAY NO?”**

28-29 JUNE

**CONFERENCE ON DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS – 2012 (CODE – 2012)**

4 AUGUST

**MEETING OF HUNGARIAN AWARDEES OF THE HONORARY TITLE**

**“RIGHTEOUS AMONG THE NATIONS”**

9 SEPTEMBER

**MEMORIAL EVENING AT THE DOHÁNY STREET SYNAGOGUE**

## THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE RAOUL WALLENBERG YEAR IN HUNGARY

<b>DATE:</b>	17 January 2012
<b>PLACE:</b>	Hungarian National Museum
<b>CONTENT:</b>	<p>The official opening ceremony of the Wallenberg Year took place on the <b>day Wallenberg was last seen</b>. The event was hosted by H.E. Mr. <b>János Martonyi</b>, Foreign Minister of Hungary and H.E. Mr. <b>Carl Bildt</b>, Foreign Minister of Sweden. The selected venue – the Hungarian National Museum - expresses the message that Wallenberg’s activities is a <b>national cause</b>. The guest of honour of the event was Israeli Minister <b>Yossi Peled</b>.</p> <p>On the occasion, the “<b>To me there’s no other choice – Raoul Wallenberg 1912 – 2012</b>” Swedish exhibition will also be opened.</p> <p>The opening will also offer the context for the <b>prize ceremony for the winners of the city knowledge competition</b> (see details below) organised by the Wallenberg Association in 2011, as well as for the <b>bestowal of the 2012 Wallenberg Award</b>. The Wallenberg Award, which was founded among others by the Wallenberg Association (<a href="http://www.wallenberggyesulet.hu">www.wallenberggyesulet.hu</a>) and the predecessor of the Ministry of National Resources, may be awarded to organisations or private individuals, who make a significant contribution to promoting tolerance and peaceful coexistence. On the occasion of the centennial Hungarian and international public figures who in the course of their careers have worked hard to shed light on the unknown parts of Wallenberg’s life have also been recognized. (Jan Lundvik, former Ambassador of Sweden to Hungary; Kate Wacz and Annette Lantos – the latter is the widow of Tom Lantos – saved by Raoul Wallenberg.)</p>

## “IT WAS A LONG TIME AGO – WHERE WAS IT?”, COMPETITION IN CITY KNOWLEDGE

<b>DATE:</b>	March, April, May
<b>PLACE:</b>	Budapest, Győr, Székesfehérvár, Miskolc
<b>CONTENT:</b>	<p>Competition in city knowledge for students aged between 14 and 18 years titled “It was a long time ago – Where was it?” The purpose of this competition is for students to work on <b>the theme of the Hungarian Holocaust, the activities of the rescuers and the coexistence of Jewish-Hungarian culture, as well as for the students to get to know the memorial sites of the Holocaust and of the rescuers</b>.</p> <p>In the first round the participants participate in a city knowledge tour of Holocaust and rescuer memorial sites in the (capital) city. In the second round the students have to prepare a short film on the city knowledge tour and write an essay on the activities of Raoul Wallenberg and other rescuers during World War II.</p> <p>The co-operating partners of the Raoul Wallenberg Association are the Holocaust</p>

Memorial Center, the Ferenc Méri Institute of Education and Career Counselling, and the Raoul Wallenberg Humanities Vocational and Secondary School. The competition in 2012 has become possible by the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

## MARCH OF THE LIVING

**DATE:** 15 April 2012

**PLACE:** Budapest, Sára Salkaházi Quay to Raoul Wallenberg Quay

**CONTENT:** Each year in the last 10 years, the March of the Living Foundation ([www.eletmenete.hu](http://www.eletmenete.hu)) has organised the March of the Living, offering the possibility for everyone to **remember the victims of the Holocaust in Hungary**. The programme consists of a memorial tour and speeches in the streets of Budapest. With regard to the Wallenberg centennial, **this year's March of the Living focuses on the righteous people, among them Raoul Wallenberg**. The march began on the quay named after Sára Salkaházi and finished on the quay named after Wallenberg. **H.E. Mr. László Kövér, the Speaker of the Hungarian National Assembly and H.H. Mr. Per Westerberg, Speaker of the Riksdag participated at the event.**

(Sára Salkaházi was a sister of the Society of Social Nurses, the rescuer of almost one hundred Hungarian Jews and a martyr at the hands of the Arrow Cross regime).

## WALLENBERG MEMORIAL CONCERT

**DATE:** 15 April 2012

**PLACE:** House of Terror Museum

**CONTENT:** An outdoor Wallenberg Memorial Concert took **place in front of the Museum of the House of Terror**, organized by the museum itself, on the Memorial Day of the Victims of the Holocaust ([www.terrorhaza.hu](http://www.terrorhaza.hu)).

## ISSUING OF THE WALLENBERG STAMP

**DATE:** 10 May 2012

**CONTENT:** The Hungarian Post Office issued special stamps honoring Raoul Wallenberg on the occasion of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

The Hungarian Post Office also opened a stamp exhibition on the very same day, most likely in the Stamp Museum in Budapest. The exhibition recalls the era of the Second World War presenting stamps on Raoul Wallenberg and other rescuers.

## SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE: “CAN WE SAY NO?”

<b>DATE:</b>	15 May 2012
<b>PLACE:</b>	Holocaust Documentation Centre ( <a href="http://www.hdke.hu">www.hdke.hu</a> )
<b>CONTENT:</b>	<p>The scientific conference was organised in honour of the centennial of the birth of Raoul Wallenberg and of the <b>moral courage of Count János Esterházy</b>. 70 years ago it was on this day that Count János Esterházy was the only person in the Slovak parliament not to vote for the deportation of the Jews.</p> <p>The purpose of the conference was to <b>examine moral opposition in our region</b> through the examples of Raoul Wallenberg, Count János Esterházy and other persons, who <b>fought terror and all forms of physical or intellectual violence with exceptional moral force in the Holocaust era</b>. Special attention was dedicated at the conference to rescuers in the Carpathian Basin, who after the German occupation, at the time of the fullest persecution, gave up their jobs, reported ill, impeded in any way the inhumane regime, the ghettoization, infringements on lawful rights, and violence against their persecuted compatriots. The panellists recalled the example and the deeds of those <b>who after 1945 countered the scapegoating mechanisms, the expansion of the Stalinist dictatorship, stood for the rights of minorities, and against further forced relocation of populations from or to the country</b>.</p> <p>The material of the conference will be used in an abridged version in teacher training, further education, as well as for school education and pedagogy.</p>

## CONFERENCE ON DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS – 2012

<b>DATE:</b>	June 2012
<b>PLACE:</b>	Budapest
<b>CONTENT:</b>	<p>The yearly great international human rights conference organised jointly by the International Centre for Democratic Transition (<a href="http://www.icdt.hu">www.icdt.hu</a>), the Tom Lantos Institute (<a href="http://www.tomlantosinstitute.hu">www.tomlantosinstitute.hu</a>) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will in 2012 be built on themes related to Raoul Wallenberg. The history section of the conference would present <b>the new results of the international scientific research related to Wallenberg</b>. Part of the human rights sections would examine <b>questions concerning rescuing</b> (prejudice and conflict prevention, dictatorships and rescuers), while another part would focus on current international human rights issues.</p> <p>The conference will be opened by János Martonyi, Minister for Foreign Affairs; Michael Wernstedt, member of the Wallenberg family; Thorbjorn Jagland, Secretary General of the Council of Europe, among others.</p> <p>The co-organisers of the conference will be the Holocaust Memorial Centre and the Raoul Wallenberg Association and Foundation.</p>

## MEETING OF HUNGARIAN AWARDEES OF THE HONORARY TITLE “RIGHTEOUS AMONG THE NATIONS”

<b>DATE:</b>	4 August 2012 (Wallenberg’s birthday)
<b>PLACE:</b>	Holocaust Memorial Centre
<b>CONTENT:</b>	Wallenberg’s birth centennial is an excellent opportunity for <b>Hungarians who have been awarded the honorary title Righteous Among the Nations in Israel to meet in Budapest</b> and to receive a memorial certificate on the occasion of the Centennial. During the course of the event, international figures who rescued Hungarian Jews during the war may also be honoured.

## MEMORIAL EVENING IN THE DOHÁNY STREET SYNAGOGUE

<b>DATE:</b>	September 2012
<b>PLACE:</b>	Dohány Street Synagogue
<b>CONTENT:</b>	The programme commemorates Raoul Wallenberg. In the course of the evening the Shir Ami ensemble would give a concert. Following this the organisers would present a short film on Wallenberg’s work. The screening will be followed by speeches. Organizer of the event: March of the Living Foundation.

## VISAS FOR LIFE EXHIBITION

<b>DATE:</b>	Autumn
<b>PLACE:</b>	Hungary, different locations
<b>CONTENT:</b>	The Embassy of the State of Israel in Budapest brings the exhibition entitled ‘Visas for Life’ to Hungary. The exhibition <b>commemorates foreign diplomats</b> who saved lives at the time of the Hungarian Holocaust. <a href="http://www.visasforlife.info/">http://www.visasforlife.info/</a>

## **GET-TOGETHER OF YOUNG ISRAELI, SWEDISH AND HUNGARIAN YOUNG DIPLOMATS**

<b>DATE:</b>	9 September
<b>PLACE:</b>	First in Hungary
<b>CONTENT:</b>	The aim is to launch a sequence of meetings of young diplomats in Tel Aviv, Stockholm and Budapest in rotation, where they could argue on the meaning of being a diplomat in dangerous or even in tragic times.

## OTHER INITIATIVES

### EXHIBITION ON WALLEMBERG'S ACTIVITY IN HUNGARY

The House of Terror Museum and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs arranged a travelling exhibition, entitled "**Man amidst Inhumanity**" on the activities of Raoul Wallenberg in the historical context of Hungary. As a travelling exhibition, it will be on view in several capitals.

### PUBLICATIONS

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in cooperation with the Holocaust Memorial Center, publishes a booklet, which **presents the persons living in Hungary or of Hungarian origin who**, even against the Nazi purposes, heroically and in a self-sacrificing way **stood by the persecuted Jewish people**, and did all that was in their scope of authority and competence to rescue them.

The book written by **Szabolcs Szita: "With Raoul Wallenberg to Moscow"**, elaborating the life of Vilmos Langfelder, is to be translated to English.

### MEMORIAL PLACES

Several memorial places in Budapest commemorate Wallenberg. These will be wreathed in the context of the individual events.

**FURTHER INFORMATION: [WWW.WALLEMBERG.HU](http://WWW.WALLEMBERG.HU)**