



The International Raoul Wallenberg Foundation

Letter to the Ministers of Foreign Affairs from countries that comprise the Task Force

New York, July 6, 2009

We are writing you from the International Raoul Wallenberg Foundation, a global-reach NGO with offices in New York, Jerusalem, Berlin, Rio de Janeiro and Buenos Aires.

Our mission is to research, document and promote the brave legacies of the rescuers of victims of the Holocaust, focusing on tailor-made educational programs that underscore their deeds to the younger generations.

On March 2009, Norway assumed the chairmanship of the 27-nation Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research, an organization that aims to place political and social leaders' support behind the need for Holocaust education remembrance and research, both nationally and internationally.

A few months earlier, the Norwegian government announced that 2009 marks the 150th anniversary of the birth of the Norwegian Nobel Prize Laureate, Knut Hamsun. In Norway, the National Library will be responsible for the official anniversary celebration. Hamsun related events have been taking place from February until September.

It is common knowledge that Knut Hamsun did not hide his sympathy and his support for the National Socialist government of Adolf Hitler, and that in 1940 he was pleased to welcome the Nazi invasion of his country. Moreover, in 1943, he dedicated his Nobel Prize to Joseph Goebbels, Minister of

Propaganda of the Nazi regime. On May 7th, 1945, Knut Hamsun wrote a laudatory obituary published by the newspaper “Aftenposten”, where he described Hitler as a “warrior for the Humanity”.

On behalf of the members of the Raoul Wallenberg Foundation, allow me to express our astonishment and concern about the tribute of a person who actively supported one of the most sinister regimes in history. This is particularly surprising coming from Norway, a country which is a perfect example of social and educational development.

Therefore, taking into consideration what was exposed in this letter, we would appreciate it if you could inform us on the procedures that you and your government intend to take to address this issue, since recognizing the 150th anniversary of Knut Hamsun absolutely contradicts the main goals of the Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research education.

Looking forward to receiving your comments I salute you cordially,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Baruch Tenenbaum", written over a horizontal line.

Baruch Tenenbaum
Founder