

Speech

Eduardo Eurnekian
Chairman
The Raoul Wallenberg Foundation

Your Excellency, Prime Minister Xavier Bettel
Distinguished members of the Prime Minister's delegation
Members of the diplomatic representations
The Consul General of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, Hon Ms. Jeanne
Crauser
Distinguished guests
Ladies and Gentlemen

It is a great honor for me to be here, in New York, together with my friend and founder of the International Raoul Wallenberg Foundation, Baruj Tenenbaum.

I would like to start by thanking Consul Crauser, for hosting this event at the Luxembourg House.

Today, we are bestowing the Raoul Wallenberg Medal upon His Excellency, Mr. Xavier Bettel, Prime Minister of Luxembourg in recognition of his dedication and support to the fight against: Any form of racism and discrimination, his firm stance in favor of human rights, and, as representative of his fellow-countrymen, like the late Minister of Justice, Victor Bodson, who did not stand idly-by during the Holocaust, reaching-out to the victims of the Nazi persecution and extermination machine.

Another manifestation of Prime Minister Bettel's firm commitment to this cause, was made very clear in written declaration of June 6th, 2015, which read: "The Government presents its apologies to the Jewish community for the suffering that was inflicted on it and the injustices that were committed against it, and recognizes the responsibility of some public officials in the unforgivable events committed."

Our NGO's mission is to research and divulge the spirit of this solidarity -as displayed by the Swedish diplomat Wallenberg- and all the other rescuers, regardless of their nationality, religion or ethnicity.

One such a hero was the afore-mentioned Victor Bodson, a distinguished politician from Luxembourg, who risked his life on many occasions, in order to save scores of Jews, by creating and operating an escape-route over the river Sauer, next to his private residence.

The International Raoul Wallenberg Foundation believes that other brave heroes in Luxembourg must have been involved in rescue operations, like Mr. Bodson, and we shall do our utmost to shed light on their stories of courage.

Our Foundation's flagship program is entitled "Houses of Life". Its aim is to identify and mark with commemorative plaques, physical sites in Europe, that gave shelter to victims of the Holocaust.

In most cases, those were children, left by their parents before their deportation to concentration and death camps.

To our surprise, we have already identified more than 500 Houses of Life across Europe, and we hope to be able to include Houses of Life in Luxembourg to our daily growing list.

The Raoul Wallenberg Foundation has, for many years now, dedicated itself to locating and bringing home Raoul Wallenberg and his driver, Vilmos Langfelder, and we are, still today, mobilizing every possible effort, to obtain information that may assist us in retracing their last steps.

Moreover, we have even instituted a special reward for scientifically verifiable leads, that serve to point us in the right direction.

In this sense, I would like to take this opportunity to ask, Prime Minister Bettel, for his help in raising awareness of this matter, a gesture that would be greatly appreciated.

Our only goal is to bring closure to this human tragedy.

Your Excellency, congratulations on this well-merited recognition.

I am proud to bestow, on behalf of our foundation, the Raoul Wallenberg Medal.

As a young politician, we wish you many more years of success in your endeavors.