

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to live in a country where there is and never will be a need for Raoul Wallenbergs. I would like to live in a Europe where young people sharing values and ideals similar to those represented by Wallenberg can lead a full life; can pursue public activity thereby answering the call dictated by their conscience to help those in need. I would like to live in a world where those following Wallenberg's virtues are respected and appreciated by society.

Born a hundred years ago, Raoul Wallenberg would have deserved that sort of respect and appreciation instead of the prison of Ljubljanka and the Gulag of Communism. This was his fate, to share the fatelessness of those he rescued.

The truth is that the 20<sup>th</sup> century was an age that badly needed Raoul Wallenberg. There was a need for Raoul Wallenberg and others too; Jews and non-Jews, the righteous of the world and lifesavers because Europe could not safeguard the safety of a specific group of its citizens, the Jews. Hungary needed Raoul Wallenberg because Hungary as a state was not able to fulfil its fundamental task and during the Holocaust it did not guarantee the personal safety of a certain group of its citizens, Hungary's Jewish community. What is more, what is worse, Hungary's public administration did take part in destroying them.

It is our task today, the duty of our whole society, but above all of those in governing positions to ensure that Hungary becomes a country which unconditionally protects every single citizen's safety without discriminating by identity, origin, religion, or language. The Hungarian Government may not know compromise in this. It is for this very reason that we have to use all available governmental instruments to prevent and fight any anti-Semitic phenomenon that rears its ugly head in our society. This is why the holders of the highest public offices, the President, the Speaker of the National Assembly and the Prime Minister of Hungary, with the full weight of their offices, express their solidarity with those who have suffered such atrocities. Each and every citizen of Hungary and every visitor of our country can rest assured that the state will guarantee their safety with all the instruments it has at its disposal.

A crucial lesson of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is for us that the law and legislation are the main tools that can protect individuals and communities alike.

Wallenberg taught us that it is our responsibility to legally enforce the principle of personal and collective rights and safety in our own country and it is our moral duty to promote it all over the world. This is the perspective from which we observe our region, all the conflict zones around the world, especially the one in the Middle East. As there are many former Hungarian citizens living in the Middle -East, some of whom are survivors of the Holocaust rescued by Wallenberg and some who re-applied for and were again issued the Hungarian citizenship, it is especially important for us to know that they are safe.

It is my strong belief that only those states which are based on values held dear and symbolized by Wallenberg and his legacy are capable of guaranteeing that we live in a world where there is no longer a need for heroic actions such as Raoul Wallenberg's.

On behalf of the Hungarian Government, it is with these thoughts that I would like to pay my tribute to the memory of that righteous man, Raoul Wallenberg.