



75<sup>th</sup> anniversary  
2 August 2019

# European Roma Holocaust Memorial Day

Press Release

## Joint Appeal by Civil Rights Activists Jesse Jackson and Romani Rose on the European Holocaust Memorial Day for Sinti and Roma in Auschwitz-Birkenau

**Heidelberg, July 31 | With the civil rights activists Rev. Jesse L. Jackson Sr., President of the Rainbow/PUSH Coalition (RPC), and Romani Rose, Chairman of the Central Council of German Sinti and Roma, for the first time a representative of the US civil rights movement and a representative of the Sinti and Roma civil rights movement in Europe will speak together on 2 August in Auschwitz-Birkenau. They will also sign a worldwide appeal for commitment to the rule of law and democracy and against all forms of racism.**

On the 75th anniversary of the murder of about 4,300 Sinti and Roma on August 2, 1944, Jesse L. Jackson Sr. is the first representative of the American civil rights movement to speak at the European Holocaust Memorial Day for Sinti and Roma.

On this historic occasion Mr. Jackson Sr. and Romani Rose, Chair of the Centre Council of German Sinti and Roma, will sign a joint appeal during the commemoration ceremony starting at 11 am (admission at 10 am). They are calling for a global solidarity commitment against racism, antigypsyism and antisemitism, and in awareness of the history are appealing to everyone's responsibility for rule of law and democracy. The appeal is also expressly addressed to the international community of states to recognize and implement minority rights.

In advance Jesse L. Jackson said:

*„The human soul is made to be shuddered and to be hurt. We're made to cry out. We've seen the face of evil through the genocide against the Sinti and Roma people. The power and pain of this immoral and inhumane act must give way to an eternal resurrection of hope. The battle for the soul of humanity must not be surrendered. The tears will never stop flowing but we must always Keep Hope Alive. Just as we remember and fight for civil rights in the USA, so too we will keep the fight for dignity and justice of the Sinti and Roma people close to our hearts.“*

Romani Rose stressed that the Holocaust meant a responsibility for all people:

*„It is the legacy of all victims of the Holocaust, of all people who were murdered by the Nazis, that we must carry within us. We must pass this legacy on to future generations. This legacy requires us to take responsibility for democracy and the rule of law, for human rights and human dignity. Today and in the future.“*

Every year the Central Council of German Sinti and Roma and the Roma Association in Poland in cooperation with the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum commemorate the persecution and murder of Sinti and Roma during National Socialism with an international commemoration ceremony at the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial for Sinti and Roma. This year's commemoration will be attended by high-level representatives of governments, delegations of parliamentarians, representatives of international organizations and the civil society. The Auschwitz survivors Else Baker, Éva Fahidi-Pusztai and Nadir Dedic will speak for the Holocaust survivors.

Up to 1,500 guests from all over Europe are expected to attend the commemoration ceremony.

### Accreditation

Marius Lüdicke will gladly be at your disposal for accreditation and further inquiries ([marius.luedicke@sintiundroma.de](mailto:marius.luedicke@sintiundroma.de)).

**Additional information can be found at** <https://zentralrat.sintiundroma.de/pressebereich/>

### Interviews

The commemoration on 2 August will be attended by a few elderly people who survived the genocide of the Sinti and Roma. This event is of great importance to them and their families, because it honours them and their fate. On prior request we can arrange interviews with survivors, speakers and participating institutions.

For interview requests please also contact Thomas Baumann ([thomas.baumann@sintiundroma.de](mailto:thomas.baumann@sintiundroma.de)).

## Program

### 1 August 2019

- Attention:* at 17.00 there is a moment of silence and commemoration of the Warsaw Uprising
- Venue:* Auditorium Maximum
- 19.00-20.00 Welcome of international delegations and representatives
- 20.00-22.00 **Concert in memory of the Sinti and Roma murdered 75 years ago**  
Roma and Sinti Philharmonic Orchestra
- Recognition of Dr. Piotr Cywinski**, Director of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, with the special award of the European Civil Rights Prize of Sinti and Roma
- 22.00 Reception

### 2 August 2019

- Venue:* Auschwitz I – State Museum
- 08.30-10.00 only for invited institutional representatives and media
- Meeting at Auschwitz I with Museum Director Piotr Cywinski**  
Official welcome at the Museum (conference room in Block 12)  
Guided visit of Block 13 (Roma and Sinti), Block 27 (Shoah) and main exhibition  
Entry into Guest Book of the Auschwitz Museum
- 10.15 Departure to Birkenau
- Venue:* Birkenau, camp section B II e
- 09.00-10.30 Arrival/welcome of the guests for the commemoration
- 10.00 Start of reading of names by Roma youth (in section B II e)**
- 10.00-10.30 Entrance of the guests, walk to memorial, guests are seated
- 10.30 Arrival of VIP delegations in Birkenau, welcome of guests by organizers
- 10.40 Walk to Sinti and Roma memorial
- 10.50 Arrival at memorial: meet the survivors and VIPs
- 11.00-12.15 Commemoration ceremony: address of survivors and Jesse Jackson**
- 12.15-12.45 Commemoration: ceremony of wreaths and flowers**
- 13.00 Walk from the memorial to the entrance/parking
- 13.15 Transfer to Centre for Dialogue and Prayer (2-3 km)
- Venue:* Centre for Dialogue and Prayer
- 13.00 **Lunch and Reception**, hosted by Central Council of German Sinti and Roma, and the Association of Roma in Poland in cooperation with the State Museum Auschwitz-Birkenau
- 14.30 **Commemoration ceremony: Speeches by international organizations, parliamentary and governmental representatives**
- 15.30 end of the political part
- 16.00-20.00 Option 1: visit of the Roma Museum in Oswiecim
- 16.00-20.00 Option 2: visit of Auschwitz Museum, in particular block 13
- Venue:* International Youth Meeting Centre in Oswiecim
- 16.00-19.00 International youth event “Dikh He Na Bister”, meeting of young 500 Roma with Holocaust survivors