

Holocaust Denial and Distortion has been described as an intentional expression of antisemitism, a propaganda that denies the historical reality and extent of the massacre of the Jews by the Nazis and their allies during the Second World War. Forms of Holocaust Denial may also include publicly denying or calling into doubt the use of devices such as gas chambers, mass shooting, starvation and torture, or the intentional elimination of the Jewish people.

Distortion of the Holocaust, on the other hand, includes minimization of the number of the victims in contradiction to reliable sources and attempts to blame the Jews for either exaggerating or creating the Shoah for political or financial gain. According to one commentator on the subject, Auschwitz has been the main target of attacks by deniers.

For example, some have insisted there is no significant trace of any cyanide compound in the building, which should not be the case for a former gas chamber.

This writer goes on to underline that there is nothing new about denial of the crime of genocide or silence about it. From the beginning of the war, the Nazis themselves did everything they could to keep international public opinion and the allied countries in the dark about their extermination campaign.

He finishes the discourse pointing out that the legal procedures launched regularly against Holocaust deniers prove that the problem is real, and that it is a problem not only for public prosecutors, but also a challenge for historians and educational institutions.

This argument actually formed the basis for the creation of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA). Its sole purpose is to put political and social support behind the need for Holocaust education, remembrance and research.

Not only has IHRA's working definition of Holocaust denial and distortion laid the foundation for further resources on recognizing and countering the issue, the organization's work was also adopted by the UN's General Assembly.

The 193-member assembly agreed on the proposal without a vote and also urged social media companies to take active measures to fight antisemitism online.

The German Ambassador for the United Nations, Antje Leendertse, said that the General Assembly was sending a strong and unambiguous message against the denial or the distortion of these historical facts because ignoring them "increases the risk that they will be repeated."