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## **Seminar of the European Ministers of Education<sup>1</sup>**

### **“Teaching remembrance through cultural heritage”**

Cracow  
and Auschwitz-Birkenau, Poland  
4 - 6 May 2005

### **March of the Living**

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<sup>1</sup> Organised in the framework of the Standing Conference of European Ministers of Education, Polish Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe and the Project “Teaching Remembrance – Education for the prevention of crimes against humanity”.



## **Introduction**

Since its inception in 1988, tens of thousands of young people from more than 40 countries have participated in the March of the Living. Its mission is to provide innovative educational opportunities for young people from around the world to actively learn about the history of the Holocaust and grapple with their national past.

## **Significance of the 2005 Program**

On the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of V-E Day, commemorating the end of the Second World War in Europe, the March of the Living will organize the largest delegation to Poland in the history of the program. On May 5, 2005, Holocaust Remembrance Day, 18,000 individuals from around the globe – including world leaders and policy makers, Holocaust survivors and camp liberators – will gather in Auschwitz-Birkenau. This major event has great historical significance in light of the fact that it might be the last opportunity for a large contingent of Holocaust survivors to assemble in Poland to transmit the moral imperative of Holocaust memory and its universal legacy for future generations.

During their study tour in Poland, groups gain an understanding about the diversity and richness of prewar Jewish culture. By visiting sites that were once centers of Jewish life and scholarship (Warsaw, Krakow and Lublin) as well as the infamous extermination centers of Treblinka, Majdanek and Auschwitz-Birkenau, students appreciate the beauty of their heritage as well as begin to comprehend the enormity of its loss to western civilization. The program in Poland culminates with a three-kilometer march from Auschwitz to Birkenau on Holocaust Remembrance Day (*Yom Hashoah*) in memory of victims who were brutally murdered by the Nazis and their accomplices. Following their tour in Poland, many participants travel to Israel for a special program focusing on the theme, “from destruction to rebirth.” Clearly, this is a very moving and emotional educational journey for all involved.

## **March of the Living Goals:**

- Foster commitment to remember all those murdered in the Holocaust
- Encourage participants to examine their national past
- Pay tribute to the courage of the survivors of the Holocaust
- Honor war veterans who liberated Europe from Nazi tyranny
- Recognize the moral legacy of the “Righteous among the Nations”
- Challenge and combat Holocaust denial
- Promote tolerance, acceptance and co-existence
- Reject all forms of racism, xenophobia, antisemitism and prejudice