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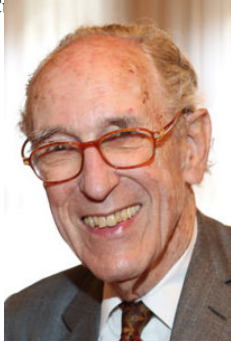


In Memoriam Retired Ambassador Wolfgang Schallenberg

10 Feb 2023

On Wednesday, 8 February 2023, retired Ambassador Wolfgang Schallenberg passed away at the age of 93.

Wolfgang Schallenberg was born an Austrian citizen in Prague in 1930. After studying law at the University of Vienna and at the University of Cambridge and the Institut des Sciences Politiques in Paris, he joined the Higher Diplomatic Service on 30 December 1952. His diplomatic career took him to the embassies in Paris, London, Buenos Aires, Caracas, Berne, New Delhi and Madrid; in Austria he was, among other things, Head of the Central Office for the Fight Against Corruption at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and, from 1992 until his retirement, Secretary General for Foreign Affairs.



Retired Ambassador Wolfgang Schallenberg 2013. (c) CC BY-SA 2.0/Franz Johann Morgenbesser Vienna

When the newly established National Fund of the Republic of Austria for Victims of National Socialism began its work in 1995, Wolfgang Schallenberg was appointed to its Committee by the Chairman of the Board of Trustees at that time, National Council President Heinz Fischer. Wolfgang Schallenberg accompanied the National Fund from the very start and helped to shape its course with his experience and commitment.

Wolfgang Schallenberg worked to serve the surviving victims of Nazism with incredible dedication and commitment, well into advanced age – as he noted, it was of fundamental personal and political importance to him and a big part of his life: Having experienced both the terrible times under the Nazi regime and then the period after 1945, his contribution to efforts to come to grips with Austria's history was a matter of personal priority. In particular, he advocated the recognition of Wehrmacht deserters as a victim group. When Wolfgang Schallenberg announced his retirement from the Committee in September 2018, it was the end of an era after 23 years at the National Fund. As Chairman of the Board of Trustees, National Council President Wolfgang Sobotka emphasised that "Ambassador Schallenberg always carried out his work for the National Fund with a sense of responsibility and awareness, respect and great personal dedication."

Wolfgang Schallenberg was not only an experienced diplomat of mighty intellect, but above all a person with a huge heart. That is how he will always be remembered by the National Fund and its staff. Secretary General Hannah Lessing paid tribute to his special role as a constant support and learned mentor to the National Fund: "His wisdom, humour and firm conviction that it was important to work in the interests of all victims have been a source of great strength to me throughout the many years."

Our thoughts are with his family, in particular his son Alexander Schallenberg who, as Federal Minister for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs, is a member of the Board of Trustees of the National Fund.