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The National Fund of the Republic of Austria is honored by Yad Vashem

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Since its establishment in 1995, the National Fund has sponsored several of Yad Vashem's projects, for example the traveling exhibition currently on display at the Nestroyhof in Vienna, "Besa. A code of honor", which presents the portraits and stories of twelve Albanian Muslims who saved Jews from extermination by the Nazis. Another such exhibition sponsored by the Fund, "Spots of Light – to be a woman in the Holocaust" specifically deals with women's experiences and survival strategies during the Holocaust. The National Fund also sponsored a long term project spanning several years for which sources in Austrian archives which shed light on the disenfranchisement and expulsion of Austrian Jews after the "Anschluss" in 1938 were recorded and catalogued.

In addition to representatives from the National Fund and Yad Vashem, the Chairman of the Association for Jews from Austria in Israel, Gideon Eckhaus, and Mosche Jahoda, as representative of the Claims Conference in Vienna, participated in the ceremony. After viewing the exhibition on the trial of the Nazi war criminal Adolf Eichmann, who, after his capture in 1961, was tried before an Israeli court, a remembrance ceremony was held in the Hall of Remembrance. During this ceremony, the Secretary General of the National Fund, Hannah Lessing, and the Austrian ambassador in Israel, his Excellency Dr. Franz Josef Kuglitsch, laid a wreath in remembrance of those murdered in the Holocaust. Lessing dedicated the symbolic rekindling of the eternal flame to her grandmother, who was murdered in the concentration and extermination camp Auschwitz.

Avner Shalev, Chairman of the Directorate of Yad Vashem, unveiled a plaque inscribed with the name of the National Fund on the wall of supporters, situated in the central square in front of the memorial's entrance. In his speech, Shalev acknowledged the National Fund's achievements and expressed recognition of the work of its staff, as "there are many people behind the work of every organization". Ambassador Kuglitsch emphasized the social and political importance of the National Fund in Austria in his speech.

Hannah Lessing, who accepted the award on behalf of the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees, Barbara Prammer, noted in her speech that the National Fund, established on 50th anniversary of the foundation of the Second Republic, was a visible expression of a change in the way that Austria is dealing with her National Socialist past. In this respect, the award was a great mark of recognition as it may not be forgotten that a great many people from Austria perpetrated National Socialist crimes. Facing up to her National Socialist past had been a long and often difficult process for Austria, she added. The 1993 speech by the former Federal Chancellor Franz Vranitzky in Jerusalem had marked a turning point in this regard and served to highlight the Republic's special responsibility toward the victims of National Socialism.

Lessing said she believes that "memory is a powerful force which can safeguard the legacies of a broken past" and that "the stories of the lives and – even more importantly – the stories of the deaths of the millions of victims deserve to be preserved". Ensuring that the lessons learnt from National Socialism do not slowly slip away with the memory of the victims was therefore a vital part of Austria's responsibility. "The National Fund is proud to pass the flame of remembrance on to the following generations together with Yad Vashem".