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Media Alert

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AMERICAN JEWISH JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEECOMMEMORATES HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY ON APRIL 21 IN 70 COUNTRIES

On April 21, 2009, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) invites Jews and non-Jews around the world to join with them in a moment of silent meditation at Noon EST to reflect on the persecution and murder of nearly six million Jews and five million non-Jews throughout Europe during World War II. In the 70 countries where JDC provides services and programs, thousands of staff members, clients, friends and supporters will take this time to commemorate Holocaust Remembrance Day.

The day honors victims, as well as survivors, along with those who showed resistance and heroism. The date of Holocaust Remembrance Day corresponds to the 27th day of the Hebrew month of Nisan, the anniversary of the start of the 1943 Warsaw Ghetto uprising.

With the rise of Hitler's Nazi regime, JDC supported heroic efforts that enabled 110,000 Jews to leave Germany prior to 1939 and hastened the escape of even more Jews to Allied territory throughout the war. From the outbreak of World War II through 1944, JDC made it possible for more than 81,000 Jews to emigrate from Nazi-occupied Europe to safety.

By 1947, more than 200,000 Jewish survivors of the Nazi horrors crowded into hastily set up displaced persons (DP) camps throughout Germany, Austria, and Italy. JDC funds were directed at restoring communal life in the camps with medical facilities, schools, synagogues and cultural activities. Even today, JDC continues to support Holocaust survivors, and it provides vital services to 168,000 Jewish seniors in the former Soviet Union alone.

Since 1914, JDC has given global expression to the principle that all Jews are responsible for one another. Working today in over 70 countries, JDC acts on behalf of North America's Jewish communities and others to rescue Jews in danger, provide relief to those in distress, revitalize overseas Jewish communities and help Israel overcome the social challenges of its most vulnerable citizens. JDC also provides non-sectarian emergency relief and long-term development assistance worldwide. For more information, please visit www.jdc.org.

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