



## **Shahid Malik MP and Councillor Andrew Pakes join the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust**

The Minister for International Development, Shahid Malik MP, and the Councillor for East Peckham Council Ward, Andrew Pakes, have joined the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust's Board of Trustees.

Holocaust Memorial Day falls on the 27 January to mark the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau. The Day is about remembering the victims of the Holocaust, Nazi persecution and other genocides, as well as an opportunity to learn the lessons of the past to prevent them occurring in the future.

Shahid said: "Holocaust Memorial Day serves as a reminder of the depths of depravity that mankind is capable of falling to. It sends a strong message of the need to be vigilant, but also the need to speak out and challenge the evil of hatred, both here and abroad."

Andrew added to this, saying: "There has never been a more important time to remember the lessons from the Holocaust and reflect on how it helps us understand the impacts of genocide and other atrocities in today's world."

This year's national commemorative event took place in Liverpool on Sunday 27 January, attended by the Chief Rabbi and Archbishop of

Canterbury. The theme for 2008 is 'Imagine...remember, reflect, react'.

Further information about Holocaust Memorial Day can be found at [www.hmd.org.uk](http://www.hmd.org.uk)

## **Ends**

### **Notes to Editor:**

For more information, please contact  
[hmd@geronimocommunications.com](mailto:hmd@geronimocommunications.com)

### Holocaust Memorial Day

- In November 2005, the United Nations established Holocaust Memorial Day as a day of remembrance across the World
- Further information can be found by visiting [\*\*www.hmd.org.uk\*\*](http://www.hmd.org.uk)
- The theme for Holocaust Memorial Day 2008 is 'Imagine...remember, reflect, react'. It asks us to remember the lives and experience of victims and survivors of the Holocaust; of Nazi persecution and of other genocides. It invites us to find new and creative ways to express this experience through art and media. Ultimately, it is a call for us to react to discrimination where we find it in today's society

### Holocaust Memorial Day Trust

- HMDT is responsible for the annual, National Commemoration of Holocaust Memorial Day. It promotes and supports HMD events and projects in local communities and schools. It raises awareness, informs and educates about the Holocaust and its contemporary relevance - especially to issues of racism;

- prejudice and discrimination. It prompts action in the UK in favour of diversity; equality and harmony between communities
- HMD commemorates all victims - the 6 million Jews exterminated in the Holocaust; groups persecuted by the Nazi regime (Roma and Sinti (Gypsies); Black people; mentally and physically disabled people; lesbian and gay people; Slavic peoples; trade unionists and political opponents) and those lost in other genocides

### Genocide in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and beyond

Since the start of the Second World War, millions have been killed in genocides across the globe. The most well-known include:

- The Holocaust, where the Jewish people were systematically targeted in an attempt to wipe them out. Over six million were murdered by 1945, in addition to the millions of Gypsies, Communists, Homosexuals and Disabled people who were also killed by the Nazis
- In 1975-1978, two million Cambodians were killed by Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge. In their attempt to create a one class society, the Khmer Rouge targeted, among others, Christians, Buddhists, and Vietnamese and Chinese groups. Roughly a quarter of all Cambodians were killed in the atrocities
- In 1994, one million Tutsis were murdered in 100 days by extremist Hutus in an attempt to eradicate the Tutsi population from Rwanda
- The current situation in Darfur, which has claimed approximately 400,000 lives to date, many of whom have been slaughtered by the government sponsored Janjaweed militia.