



**Ljiljana S. Nikšić**<sup>[1]</sup>

Ambassador, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the  
Republic of Serbia  
Belgrade (Serbia)

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# Croatia's Protest and Exhibition "Jasenovac — the Right to Remembrance" in the United Nations, on the Occasion of the Holocaust Remembrance Day in 2018

*"Croatia's protest to Serbia because of Jasenovac is as if Germany wrote a protest to Jews because of the Holocaust".*

Aleksandar Vučić,<sup>[2]</sup>

President of the Republic of Serbia

**Abstract:** "Jasenovac – the Right to Remembrance" was the first exhibition of the Republic of Serbia about Jasenovac in the UN, but also the first one with the topic of Jasenovac after the Second World War and, with 7 tons of equipment and exhibits, the most monumental exhibition in the history of the United Nations. It was held in the UN in New York's East River, from 26 January to 2 February 2018. The director of this exhibition was Professor Gideon Greif, PhD, a world-renowned historian of the Holocaust and an expert for death camps in the Second World War and the Head of the International Expert Group of Historians "GH7 – Stop to Revisionism", while the coordinator of the Serbian-Jewish academic cooperation and all the segments of the exhibition preparation was Ambassador Ljiljana Nikšić, PhD. The exhibition was opened by First Vice-President of the Government of Serbia and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Ivica Dačić, in the presence of the children-survivors of Jasenovac and other children camps in the ISC, who spoke for the first time after the Second World War in the United Nations.

The Republic of Croatia and the Croatian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in its full capacity, through all international organizations and in all possible ways tried to stop the exhibition, also by sending a diplomatic protest to the UN Commission, the State Department, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Israel and the EU. The Republic of Croatia based its protests (unsuccessfully) on the "territorial principle", since Jasenovac is situated in its territory. The United Nations took the side of the Republic of Serbia, accepting its argument that the purpose of the exhibition was the remembrance of the victims of Nazism and fascism, and that it was a matter of preserving the culture of remembrance related to the victims of the death camps in the Second World War, to whom the International

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[1] omd@mfa.rs

[2] <https://beta.rs/politika/82708-vucic-hrvatska-protestna-nota-srbiji-kao-kad-bi-nemci-ulozili-protest-jevrejima>  
(Accessed on 10 August 2022)

Holocaust Remembrance Day is dedicated, taking place in the United Nations every year. The Croatian diplomacy conducted a persistent campaign with the UN Commission, with the condition that “negotiations should be initiated between Belgrade and Zagreb” about the exhibition, and that the Serbian ambassador to Zagreb should “receive the approval” from the relevant bodies in the Republic of Croatia, and only afterwards discuss it in the UN. This was followed by the protest of the Serbian side.

The exhibition was the product of the Serbian-Jewish academic project. World agencies such as Reuters, Associated Press, Deutsche Welle, Washington Post and others, reported about the protest of the Croatian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but also wrote in detail about the exhibition and about the camp in Jasenovac, as well as about 57 methods of brutal killing that had been applied in the camp, which placed the exhibition in the focus of the world-wide attention. Immediately after the exhibition opening, on the margins of the OSCE Conference on Combating Anti-Semitism in Rome, the Serbian Minister of Foreign Affairs had a meeting with Pope Francis, but also with the President of the World Jewish Congress, using the occasion to familiarize them with Serbia’s attitudes against the initiative of the Republic of Croatia for the canonization of Ustasha vicar and arch-bishop Aloysius Stepinac, and expressing his concern over Neo-Ustashism in Croatia.

The exhibition “Jasenovac – the Right to Remembrance” in the UN brought about significant changes in the approach to Jasenovac, and resulted in the first official visit of a president of Israel. In July 2018, Reuven Rivlin was the first President of Israel who visited Belgrade and Zagreb and, on that occasion, also visited the Memorial Complex of Jasenovac and paid respects to the great martyrs of Jasenovac. During his visit to Belgrade, together with President of Serbia Aleksandar Vučić, he unveiled the plaque with the name of the street dedicated to the founder of modern Zionism, Theodor Herzl, whose father and grandfather were born in Zemun. Moreover, the result of the exhibition was also the Appeal of the World Jewish Congress to Croatian Prime Minister Andrej Plenković to adopt the Law on the Prohibition of the Use of Ustasha Greeting “Ready for the Homeland” and to remove the memorial plaque of the Croatian Defence Forces with the engraved inscription “Ready for the Homeland” from Jasenovac.

**Keywords:** Ustasha extermination camp of Jasenovac, exhibition in the UN 2018, protest of Croatia’s Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, remembrance culture, international reactions and diplomatic results



Photo 1: Presidents of Serbia and Israel, Vučić and Rivlin, at the ceremonial unveiling of the plaque for Theodor Herzl Street in Zemun, in honour of the historical, first visit of an Israeli president to Serbia after the Second World War, on 26 July 2018, only six months after the exhibition dedicated to Jasenovac in the United Nations.



Photo 2: Under the headline "Rivlin Tells Croatia to Face Its Fascist Past", Israeli daily "The Times of Israel" writes that it was on his visit to Jasenovac "death camp" from the period of the Second World War that Reuven Rivlin appealed to Croatia to "deal with its past".<sup>[3]</sup>

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[3] <https://www.rts.rs/page/stories/ci/story/3/region/3213288/izraelski-dnevnik-rivlin-u-jasenovcu-ocitao-lekciju-hrvatima.html>

## Reactions and diplomatic results of the exhibition “Jasenovac – the Right to Remembrance”, the first one in the UN

The coordination of the exhibition “Jasenovac – the Right to Remembrance” was entrusted to the Serbian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and represented a specific diplomatic challenge and a response to the exhibition of the Republic of Croatia in the European Parliament, about “blessed” Aloysius Stepinac – “the pillar of human rights” (held in 2016) and the exhibition about “Greater Serbian Aggression in the Homeland War”, in the residence of the Ambassador of Croatia in Morocco (2017). It was staged after thorough preparations within the realization of the two-year Serbian-Jewish academic project initiated in 2016 and crowned by the Agreement on Cooperation between the Serbian Ministry of Education – Minister Šarčević – and Professor Greif, PhD, from Shem Olam Faith and Holocaust Institute in Israel. The exhibition was the result of the work of the historians from seven countries, the members of the International Expert Group GH7 – Stop to Revisionism, headed by the world-renowned expert for death factories, Professor Gideon Greif, PhD, and the Director of the exhibition about Jasenovac. The coordinator of all the activities in the realization of the Serbian-Jewish academic project was Ambassador Ljiljana Nikšić, PhD. The exhibition was opened by the then First Vice-President of the Government and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Serbia, Ivica Dačić, and the children survivors of the ISC camps spoke for the

first time in the United Nations: David Alkalai, MD, from New York, who survived the camps on the islands of Rab and Pag; **Eva Deutsch Costabel** from New York, the survivor of the camp in Sisak; Smilja Tišma, the founder of the Association Jasenovac; the child survivor Jelena Buhač Radojčić, whose life story served as the basis of the first and only film about Jasenovac so far, *Dara from Jasenovac*; and Gojko Rončević Mraović, the child survivor from the camp of Jastrebarsko.

At the very entrance, in front of the hall of the General Assembly of the United Nations, there was a poster with the text in Serbian and English saying that the exhibition was not directed against any nation, religion or country, but that it was the UN contribution to the efforts in preserving the remembrance culture related to Serbs, Jews, Roma and all anti-Fascists who were cruelly killed in one of the most brutal and notorious extermination camps, the total of eight of them, in the Second World War.[4]

The honorary guest was Ms. Rosie Stephenson-Goodknight, Vice President of *Wikimedia*, and the descendant of the famous Serbian diplomat of the faith of Moses, David Albala, MD; who deserves the credit for Serbia being the first country to recognize the Balfour Declaration from 1917, i.e. the Jews’ right to return to their homeland.

On the same day, 26 January, on the Holocaust Remembrance Day, Professor Gideon Greif, PhD, Director of the exhibition and the leading expert for Auschwitz, *Sonderkommandos* and the Holocaust, had a lecture about the genocide in Jasenovac, pointing out that his lecture was aimed at protecting the remembrance culture for the victims of the

[4] The extermination camps in WWII: Auschwitz, Chelmno, Belzec, Majdanek, Sobibor, Treblinka, Mali Trostanec and Jasenovac.

Second World War. In 2018, Professor Greif also published the first volume of his trilogy about the ISC, *Jasenovac – Auschwitz of the Balkans*.

The participants of the exhibition were divided into three groups: the technical team, the delegation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which included the children-survivors, and the media group. The exhibition was also attended by a large number of ambassadors of the countries in the region, as well as the EU member countries and other countries from all over the world. The exhibition was broadcast in the media by *Večernje novosti*, the crew of Radio-Television of Serbia, as well as world agencies such as Reuters, Associated Press, Deutsche Welle, Washington Post etc.

After two years of working on the academic project of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with the relevant partners from Israel and seven more countries worldwide, as well as the International Expert Group GH7 – Stop to Revisionism (2016–2018) headed by Professor Greif, PhD, expert for death factories in the Second World War and director of the exhibition "Jasenovac – the Right to Remembrance", the exhibition about Jasenovac in the House of the National Assembly of Serbia, which was opened by the President of the National Assembly, Maja Gojković,<sup>[5]</sup> and the Ambassador of Israel, Alona Fischer-Kamm, PhD, and the first exhibition in Hoboken (USA) during 2017, which was organized by the envoy of the President of the Republic, V. Božović, and President of the Assembly of the Diaspora and Serbs in the region, MP Kostić, were followed by the exhibition "Jasenovac – the Right to Remembrance" in the UN headquarters in New York, on 26 January 2018.

## Protest of the Republic of Croatia to the UN Commission, State Department, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Israel and the EU, and ensuing reactions

Analyzing the effects of the protest of the Republic of Croatia against the exhibition "Jasenovac – the Right to Remembrance", the overall assessment is that the protest was counterproductive for the Republic of Croatia and its Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, and that among the key international factors it encountered disapproval, condemnation and surprise, and that, largely contrary to all expectations, with its negative campaign, the Republic of Croatia indirectly even led to the promotion and interest of the world public in the Serbian-Jewish exhibition about Jasenovac in the United Nations.

Croatia's Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs tried in all ways to stop the exhibition "Jasenovac – the Right to Remembrance" in the UN. First it protested in the UN Commission, with the condition that "negotiations should be initiated between Belgrade and Zagreb" about the exhibition and that the Serbian ambassador to Zagreb should "receive an approval" from the relevant authorities in Croatia, and only then discuss it in the UN. It was followed by the protest of the Serbian side, which emphasized that Israel did not ask Germany for an approval for organizing exhibitions about Eichmann or Hitler. After the consultations at the highest level, in which it was legitimately emphasized that "Jasenovac was not a territorial question of Belgrade and Zagreb",

[5] [https://rtv.rs/hu/drustvo/otvorena-izlozba-jasenovac-pravo-na-nezaborav\\_820577.html](https://rtv.rs/hu/drustvo/otvorena-izlozba-jasenovac-pravo-na-nezaborav_820577.html) (Accessed on 11 August 2022)



but a question of the remembrance culture for the Holocaust victims and genocide in one of the most brutal death camps in the Second World War. On the occasion of the International Holocaust Remembrance Day, marked by the UN every year, the official approval of the UN Commission was given for this exhibition, although only several days before its opening. The procedure of obtaining the approval from the UN bodies was made more difficult in an attempt of Croatia to prevent the 7-ton equipment from arriving on time and being ready for its placement on 20 and 21. January, because the UN has the practice of staging exhibitions only at weekends.

In the meantime, the Republic of Croatia also protested in the State Department in Washington and in Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Jerusalem, first citing the "territorial principle", because Jasenovac is situated in the territory of the Republic of Croatia, and saying that Nataša Mataušić, the Director of the Memorial Complex Jasenovac, had not been contacted although an "approval" should have been asked from her, while in the protest note itself, among other things, the Croatian side stated that the exhibition "offended the victims" and used them for current political purposes.

*In that respect, President of Serbia Aleksandar Vučić assessed the protest note of the Republic of Croatia as unsubstantiated in the media, pointing out that "the Croatian note to Serbia because of Jasenovac was as if Germany wrote a protest to Jews because of the Holocaust".*

Soon after the closing of the exhibition and the Croatian protest, President of Croatia Kolinda Grabar Kitarović sent an invitation to President of Serbia Aleksandar Vučić to visit Croatia on 12 and 13 February, which was accepted by the Serbian side.

In all media comments, Serbian highest-level officials pointed to the unsustainability of the "so-called territorial principle", according to which "only Croatia may speak about Jasenovac, because it is situated in its territory" and to the unsubstantiated protest of Croatia against the exhibition and the presentation of the facts about Jasenovac, stressing that in this way the victims and their descendants were deprived of the right to dignified remembrance. In order to prevent the prejudging of the Vatican's decision about the role of Aloysius Stepinac in the Ustasha genocide in the ISC, the Croatian side insisted that before the decision about the canonization, the expression of any opinions should not be allowed about the role and deeds of Aloysius Stepinac. In that respect, the poster was not on Stepinac, but instead on the brutal killing of Vukašin Mandrapa, who was canonized in 1998 as Holy Jasenovac Martyr Vukašin Mandrapa of Klepci, and the fate of Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, who was canonized by the Catholic Church in 1998 because of her martyrdom in Auschwitz.

The antipodes to the canonization of Aloysius Stepinac, Vukašin Mandrapa and Saint Teresa Benedicta of the Cross



Photo 3: Saint Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, Edith Stein



Photo 4: The fresco of the Holy Jasenovac Martyrs in the crypt of Saint Sava Temple, the suffering described and incorporated into the foundation of the identity of the Serbian people

The key observations regarding the protest of the Republic of Croatia are as follows:

1. The planetary central manifestation, the Holocaust Remembrance Day, is marked every year in the United Nations "without consultations" with Berlin, Vienna, Rome and Tokyo, and without "their protest".

2. Tel Aviv does not consult Berlin and Vienna when staging exhibitions about Eichmann or Hitler, nor does it ask for permission to open an exhibition about death camps, although Dachau, Auschwitz

and Mauthausen are not situated in the territory of Israel.

3. Croatia's protest against the exhibition about Jasenovac was not supported by international factors. On the contrary, the cabinet of Secretary General António Guterres approved the exhibition, the State Department and Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs did not join Croatia's "protest" according to which, among other things, Serbia allegedly "offended the victims" and "manipulated" with the exhibition, not contributing to the reconciliation in the region.

4. On 2 February, Ms. Zaharova, Spokeswoman of Russia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, at the press conference of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, explicitly supported the exhibition "Jasenovac – the Right to Remembrance", pointing out that the exhibition had contributed to the struggle against revision of the history of suffering in the Second World War.

5. Associated Press, Reuters, New York Times, as well as Washington Post, Deutsche Welle and others reported about Croatia's "protest" against the exhibition, with the mandatory explanation about the location of the camp and the methods used in Jasenovac, thus indicating that it was one of the most brutal death camps in the Second World War. This was in favour of the Serbian foreign policy interests in disseminating the truth about Jasenovac.

6. Afterwards, First Vice-President of the Government and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia, Ivica Dačić, met Pope Francis in Rome, on the margins of the OSCE Conference on Combating Anti-Semitism, as well as President of the World Jewish Congress, Lauder, and Executive Director R. Singer. On that occasion, he informed them about Serbia's attitudes to Croatian revision-

ist attempts in relation to Jasenovac and the ISC and the rehabilitation of Ustasha criminals from the Second World War, inviting them to visit the exhibition after their return to New York.

7. Afterwards, on 31 January 2018, on the margins of the central manifestation of the Holocaust Remembrance Day in the UN, the exhibition “Jasenovac – the Right to Remembrance” was visited by General Counsel of the World Jewish Congress, Menachem Rosensaft, and Chief of the Cabinet of the World Jewish Congress, Daniel Radomski.

8. The fact that the exhibition is the result of the Serbian-Jewish academic project led by the world-renowned expert for death factories, Professor Gideon Greif, PhD, and that as many as seven historians from seven countries worked on it, served as a deterrent from the assaults on the “validity of historical facts” and the complaint about the so-called “lack of consultations” of the Serbian history with the historians from other countries.

### Scientific lecture of Professor Gideon Greif, PhD: “Jasenovac – Auschwitz of the Balkans”

In the morning, the lecture on the topic “Jasenovac – Auschwitz of the Balkans” was delivered by Professor Gideon Greif, PhD, who is the main historian of Shem Olam Faith and Holocaust Institute in Israel, world-renowned expert for Auschwitz, Majdanek, Jasenovac and *Sonderkommandos*. Speaking about the killing methods in Jasenovac and comparing “manual killing of the victims in Jasenovac” and “industrial killing” in Auschwitz, he emphasized that the main goal of the exhibition was to foster the remembrance culture for

Serbian, Jewish, Roma and anti-Fascist victims of the Holocaust and genocide in Jasenovac, one of the most brutal and notorious out of the total of eight extermination camps in the Second World War. Among other things, he emphasized that it was the greatest and the most monumental exhibition about Jasenovac, with 7 tons of equipment and exhibits, which was first staged in the United Nations. Concerning the protest of the Republic of Croatia, he stated that he had never received a protest note from the German Government and Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the course of 42 years of publishing works, organizing exhibitions and scientific conferences about Eichmann, Auschwitz and death factories. Speaking about the exhibition for Deutsche Welle, *Večernje novosti* and other media, Israeli historian Gideon Greif said that it was not contention in any respect; on the contrary, he found it unique and indispensable in the struggle against revision of history and the emergence of Neo-Ustashism.

### The speech Serbia’s Minister of Foreign Affairs at the ceremony of exhibition opening in the UN and the invitation to Croatia’s Prime Minister Andrej Plenković to pay respects to the victims of Jasenovac

Opening the exhibition in the UN, Ivica Dačić, Minister of Foreign Affairs at the time, emphasized that the exhibition was aimed not only to familiarize the international public with a less known chapter of the Second World War, but also to warn about the danger of reviving the ideology and political practice that had led to such atrocities. “Part of such attempts are also non-scientific



reinterpretations of the events and processes from the period of the Second World War that are becoming part of public speech and justify crimes. Our duty is to fight against it because forgetting crimes is a new crime and an invitation for its repetition". Quoting the protest of Croatia's Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, he stressed: "We also here, in the course of the organization, faced the objection of one country saying that we manipulated with numbers and facts. There are no manipulations at all; these are historical facts, first and last names, statements of the survivors". He also said that Serbia did not accuse anyone except for criminals and those defending those criminals because it was the basis for something like this to repeat in the future. "We have not come here to argue, but our nation suffered the greatest casualties in Jasenovac and the ISC during the Second World War. It is our obligation to remember it. That is why we are here and that is why the UN were formed – so that fascism must never repeat and we strongly support that belief."

In 1960s, the memorial site was built in Jasenovac e, partly under the pressure of the victims' families. That is why death camp of Jasenovac must remain one of the most important symbols of the Second World War. Dačić emphasized that the victims that had fallen for the ideals of a better and free world must not be in vain.

At the end of his speech, he sent an invitation to Andrej Plenković, Prime Minister of the Republic of Croatia: "Just as Plenković is going to Jerusalem to pay respects to the victims in Yad Vashem, we expect him to do it in Jasenovac and to say loudly who the victims are. Whether there are 50, 100 or 700 of them; if only one man was killed because

he was Jewish, Serbian or Roma, it is a disgrace to the humanity."

## Messages of the exhibition display

The exhibition constitutes a modest contribution to the preservation of universal values of humanity and the UN's global efforts aimed at preventing the emergence of revisionism and rehabilitation of Neo-Nazi and Neo-fascist ide-



Photo 5: The poster from the exhibition "Jasenovac – the Right to Remembrance", 26 January 2018, the United Nations

ologies of exclusion and all forms of discrimination and fanaticism.

It supports the UNICEF efforts towards protecting the most vulnerable category of population, by fostering children's rights to a happy childhood, taking into account that the Ustasha death camp was also a camp for children, where 20,000 were brutally killed.

The main aim of the exhibition is to foster the remembrance culture for Serbian, Jewish, Roma and anti-Fascist victims of the Holocaust and genocide in Jasenovac, one of the most brutal and notorious out of the total of eight extermination camps in the Second World War.

### Exclusive details of the exhibition display

The panels, photo-walls with memories, sculptures and drawings by artists and artefacts that belonged to Jewish and Serbian victims were also displayed, together with the archive material, in posters in Serbian and English, as integral part of this exhibition. The objects and archive material were used from the state and private archives, museums and art collections, such as: the Memorial Centre Donja Gradina in Republic Srpska, the Museum of the City of Belgrade, the Museum of Jewish History in Belgrade, the Archives of Yugoslavia, the Archives of the Yugoslav Cinematheque, the Archives of Israel and the USA, the National Archives of Oslo, the Archives of Germany, Italy and Croatia (publications from the Memorial Centre of Jasenovac by author Nataša Mataušić), as well as from the private archives from Haiti (property of Emile Saint-Lot's family), the sculpture collection of Nandor Glid from Belgrade etc.

• The visitors could see the fate of 91 members of the family of Serbian-American inventor Nikola Tesla, killed in the Ustasha genocide in the ISC, 13 of whom were killed in Jasenovac in the Second World War, as well as 13 members of the Herzl family from Zemun, the family of Theodor Herzl, the founder of modern Zionism; and the fate of Rabi Daniel Isaac Danon, who was cruelly killed in Jasenovac, as well as the fate of Ida Fogel and her whole family. The visitors could also see the medallion made of

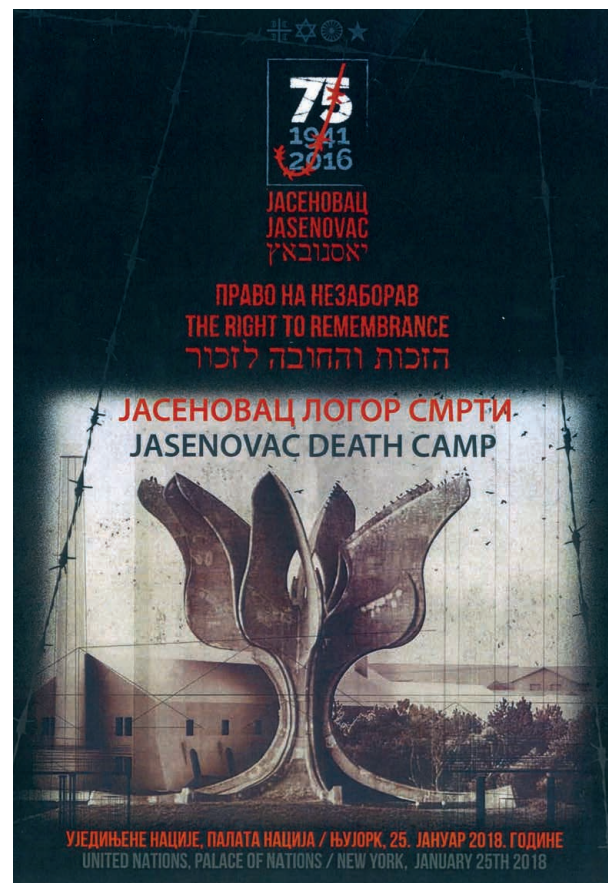


Photo 6: The poster from the exhibition "Jasenovac - the Right to Remembrance", 26 January 2018, the United Nations

ЈЕВРЕЈСКЕ ЖРТВЕ УСТАШТВА И ФАШИЗМА  
JEWISH VICTIMS OF USTASHISM AND FASCISM

АНА КОХ  
ANA KOCH

АУТЕНТИЧНИ ПРЕДМЕТИ ЖРТВЕ ХОЛОКАУСТА, АНЕ КОХ,  
ЧЛАНОВИ ПОРОДИЦЕ ЗАВРШИЛИ СУ У АУШВИЦУ

ЈЕВРЕЈСКЕ ДАМЕ ИЗ ВИСОКОГ ДРУШТВА БЕОГРАДА, ИЗ КОЛЕКЦИЈЕ МУЗЕЈА ГРАДА БЕОГРАДА

AUTHENTIC EXHIBITS OF THE VICTIM OF HOLOCAUST, ANA KOCH,  
FAMILY MEMBERS ENDED UP AS VICTIMS OF AUSCHWITZ

JEWISH LADY FROM HIGH SOCIETY OF BELGRADE, Exhibits FROM THE COLLECTION OF MUSEUM OF  
THE CITY OF BELGRADE



1. Медаљон, злато, дијаманти, рубини, дим. 5,3 x 3,8 cm, дуж. ланца 50 cm, крај 19. века, оставштина Ане Кох, УПЕ 1271

Medallion, gold, diamonds, rubies, 5.3 x 3.8 cm, chain 50 cm long, late 19th century, legacy of Ana Koh, No. 1271

Photo 7: The medallion of Ana Koch, a Jewish lady from Belgrade's high society, property of the Museum of the City of Belgrade

gold, diamonds and rubies, which belonged to Ana Koch, a lady from Belgrade's high society, who died in the death camp, just as many members of her family who were killed in death camps Auschwitz and Jasenovac.

• The victims' personal belongings, as well as the tools used by the executors in Jasenovac, such as the "Serb cutter", or an axe head, were displayed for the first time in the United Nations.

• The speech of the Rapporteur of the Third Committee, His Excellency Emile Saint-Lot, from the private archives of his family from Haiti; Emile Saint-Lot and Eleanor Roosevelt, the first Chairperson of the Committee for Human Rights, presented the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in Paris, in Palais de Chaillot, on 10 December 1948.

## Technical characteristics of the exhibition display, unique in the UN history, and challenges

Upon the official request of the Mission of the Republic of Serbia to the UN, the relevant UN bodies assigned 108 m<sup>2</sup> for the exhibition about Jasenovac, published the abstract on the UN website and entered it in the Event Calendar on the occasion of the International Holocaust Remembrance Day; however, the UN bodies did not allow the removal of the gift-exhibits from Brazil, Greece and Hungary that presented the details of Rio carnival and of Ancient Greece. This was the main challenge to the engineering team, which was overcome by putting up the 7.5-metre-high backdrops; at the same time, this was a feat of its own that entailed obtaining additional certificates for the exhibition.

This is the greatest and the most monumental exhibition not only of Serbia in the UN, but also the greatest in the history of the UN since 1945. Namely, with 7 tons of the equipment and exhibits (and the 7.5-metre-high backdrops, with black draperies hung on the aluminium structure and girders in order to make an ambience unit and hide the exhibits that could not be moved, in line with the UN decision, and with the walls long as many as 15 metres), Serbia presented the victims of Jasenovac



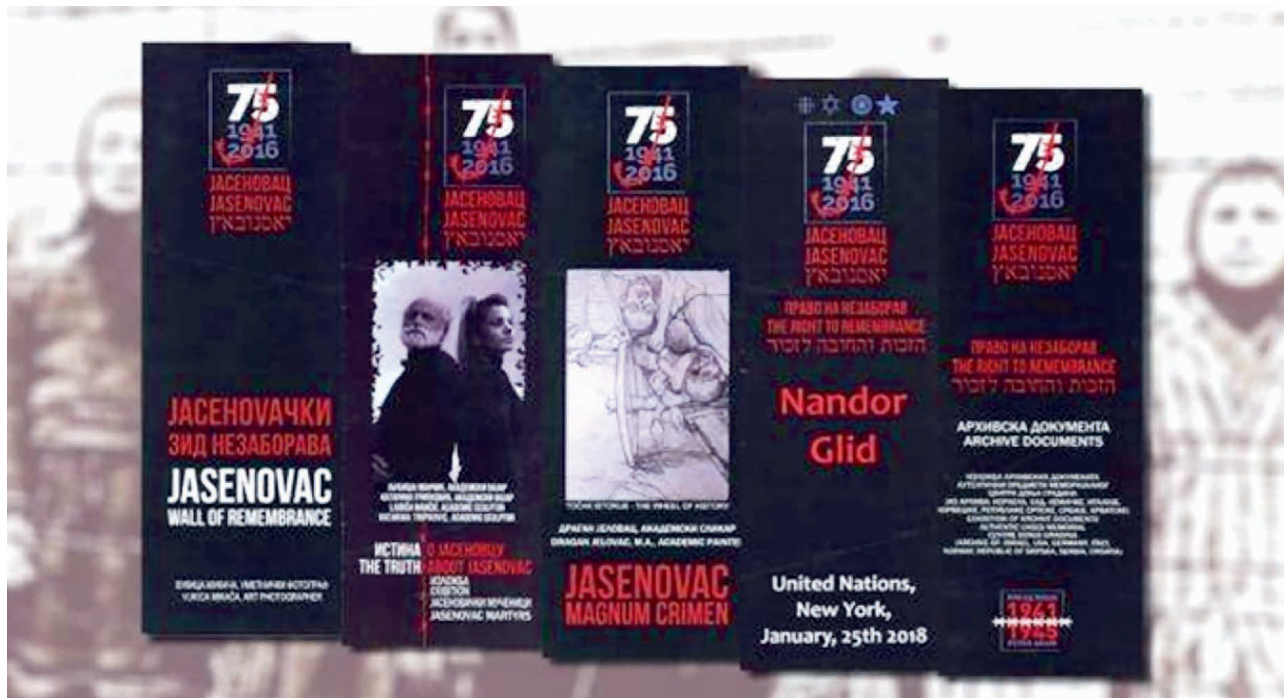


Photo 8: The sculpture catalogue for the exhibition “Jasenovac – the Right to Remembrance”



Photo 9: Miodrag Milivojević, master of light from the exhibition technical-operational team, is placing the illumination on the 10-metre-high backdrop next to the poster about the suffering of 91 members of Nikola Tesla’s close and distant family.

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Photo 10: "Jasenovac Scream", the work of academic sculptress Katarina Tripković, an exhibit

in a multimedia way, through the Serbian-Jewish project on the occasion of the International Holocaust Remembrance Day.

Two LED screens, 6 metres by 5 metres, were placed on two opposite sides and every day from 22 January to 2 February, from 9.00 am to 6 pm, the list was shown with the names of the children brutally killed in Jasenovac, with the moving archive material from 1945 and the situation found in Jasenovac, from the Archives of the Yugoslav Cinematheque.

### Authors of the exhibition – historians and artists

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The coordinator of the Serbian-Jewish academic project, Ambassador Ljiljana Nikšić, PhD, was re-



Photo 11: Monument to the Dachau victims made by the academic sculptor Nandor Glid, Yad Vashem, Israel



sponsible for the Group of Historians from seven countries, GH7 – STOP TO REVISIONISM. The Director of the exhibition was Professor Gideon Greif, who is also the author of the book *We Wept without Tears*, which served as the basis for the Academy-awarded Hollywood film *Saul's Son*.

Professor Gideon Greif elaborated the concept and the guidelines of the exhibition, while the exhibition itself was realized in cooperation with the members of the International Group of Historians GH7 – Stop to Revisionism: Rabbi Avraham Krieger, PhD, the founder and Director of the Holocaust Institute in Israel; Professor Barry Lituchy, the founder and Director of the Jasenovac Research Institute in New York;



Photo 12: The gallery format of the Monument to the Dachau victims made by the renowned academic sculptor of the Jewish Community from Serbia, Nandor Glid, was also one of the total of 40 exhibits and bronze sculptures displayed in the United Nations.



Photo 13: The exhibits from the exhibition: the posters of the International Expert Group GH7 and the gallery format of the sculpture *Hundred for One and Death Cart* by academic sculptor Nandor Glid

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Professor Emir Kusturica, the founder and Director of Andrić Institute in Višegrad and the UNICEF Ambassador; Dario Vidojković, PhD,

the historian from the University in Regensburg, Germany; Knut Flovik Thoresen, the historian from the National Archives of Norway in Oslo;

The gallery format of the sculptures made by the academic sculptor Nandor Glid displayed at the exhibition in the United Nations, 2018



Photo 14: „Death Cart“ 2



Photo 15: „Death Cart“ 3



Photo 16: „Hands“



Photo 17: „Crystal night“ #1



Photo 18: „Crystal night“ #2



Photo 19: „The Cart of Death“ 4



Photo 20: „Hundred for One“  
The original is in the Museum of Kragujevac



Photo 21: „The Cart of Death“ 5



Photo 22: „Menorah in flame“



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Croatia's Protest and Exhibition "Jasenovac – the Right to Remembrance" in the United Nations, on the Occasion of the Holocaust Remembrance Day in 2018



Photo 23: "Mauthausen"

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Mirko Galas, the young historian from the University in Udine, Italy; Colonel Antun Miletić, former Director of the Army Archives of Yugoslavia. With Dean of the Faculty of Architecture,

Professor Vladan Đokić, PhD, a group was set up for making a multimedia mock-up of Jasenovac. The mock-up weighed 2 tons, was 10 metres long and 3 metres wide, and it showed the space with



Photo 24: The drawings of academic painter Dragan Jelovac, MA, from the private collection, the series of 15 etchings entitled "Jasenovac Magnum Crimen"



Photo 25: "The live wall of remembrance in the UN" – Stop to Revisionism! We are still alive – we remember! – 26 January 2022, the United Nations

The photograph of the participants with outstretched arms and with the message STOP to revisionism, from the opening ceremony of the exhibition "Jasenovac – the Right to Remembrance", left to right: Rosie Stephenson-Goodknight, the descendant of David Albala, MD; Ambassador Ljiljana Nikšić, PhD; David Alkalai, MD, the child-survivor from the camps of Rab and Pag (86 years old); Eva Deutsch Costabel (96), the survivor of the camp in Sisak; mother Jelena Buhač Radojčić (86), the survivor of Jasenovac; Uncle Gojko Rončević Mraović (85), the survivor of the children camp of Jastrebarsko; First Vice-President and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia, Ivica Dačić; Serbian Ambassador to Washington, Đerd Matković; Ana Sofrenović, the hostess of the opening ceremony and the UNICEF Ambassador.

the buildings of Jasenovac camp which covered 240 km<sup>2</sup> (the size of about 150 football pitches) and was six times larger than Auschwitz, which took up the area of 40 km<sup>2</sup>.

Apart from the historians, researchers and public figures, the following authors with different artistic expressions made an outstanding contribution to this exhibition: academic sculptor and Professor Gabriel Glid, PhD, the son of Nandor Glid, the famous sculptor who immortalized the camp inmates through his monuments in Dachau, Mauthausen and in Yad Vashem, in honour of the Holocaust victims; Ljubiša Mančić

and Katarina Tripković; Dragan Jelovac, MA, academic painter; the author of the Wall of Remembrance was Vukica Mikača, the art photographer, while the song "Open the Door, Brother" was performed by Jadranka Jovanović, the opera prima donna, Steve Hunington Jungo Chokue, the human rights activist from Kenya, and Ana Sofrenović, while the music arrangement was made by Vojkan Borisavljević. The programme moderators were Ana Sofrenović, UNICEF Ambassador (2011) and actress, and Vjera Mujović Preiss, actress. The visual identity of the exhibition posters with the archive material and pro-



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Photo 26: The poster "The Wall of Jasenovac Remembrance", made by Vukica Mikača; a segment from the exhibition in the UN, hosted in Andrićgrad by Emir Kusturica, the founder and Director of Andrić Institute and consultant of the International Expert Group GH7 – Stop to Revisionism

motional material, flyers and books, were made by graphic designer Ivana Dakić with a group of talented young designers.

### The programme and participants at the opening ceremony

Besides Minister Dačić and Professor Greif, the opening ceremony of the exhibition was also attended by Serbian Ambassador to the USA, Đerd Matković, and Serbian Ambassador to the OUN, Milan Milanović; Ambassador Ljiljana Nikšić, PhD, coordinator of the Serbian-Jewish academic project "Jasenovac"; Mirjana Živković from the Consulate General of the Republic of Serbia in New York, and Bishop Irinej Dobrijević.

The unique "Live Wall of Remembrance" about Jasenovac and Ustasha death camps was made by special guests from Belgrade and New York, the children-survivors from the camps of Jasenovac and Jastrebarsko – Jelena Buhač Radojčić, Smilja Tišma, Gojko Rončević Mraović, who all live in Serbia, and, from New York, Eva Deutsch Costabel and David Alkalai, the survivors of Rab, Pag and Jasenovac, who met for the first time on this occasion. The Serbian, Jewish and Roma anthems were sung by Ana Sofrenović, former Ambassador of good will in the campaign conducted by UNICEF, in cooperation with "Pampers", for African children, and an outstanding actress of Serbian-British origin.

Steve Hunington Jungo Chokue, the founder of the Joint Forum for Peace in Kenya and the ac-

tivist against racism, sent a video-message for the opening ceremony.

A music video-clip was also played under the name “Open the door, brother – a man like you” of the promoter of the campaign STOP TO REVISIONISM, by the music arrangement by composer Vojkan Borisavljević, and performed by Jadranka Jovanović, the prima donna of Belgrade Opera, Ana Sofrenović and Steve Hunington. The film *Jasenovac – the Right to Remembrance*, prepared by the Archives of Yugoslav Cinematheque in Belgrade, with the authentic film material about the situation found in Jasenovac in 1945, and with the statements about Jasenovac made by the President of the Republic of Serbia, Aleksandar Vučić, Her Excellency Alona Fischer Cam, PhD, Ambassador of Israel to Belgrade, Professor Greif, PhD, and the camp survivors, were also part of the programme.

The honorary guest was Ms. Rosie Stephenson-Goodknight, Vice President of *Wikimedia* and descendant of the reputable Serbian army officer and diplomat of the faith of Moses, David Albala, MD, who deserves the credit for the first recognition of the Balfour Declaration. The first government to approve the Balfour Declaration was the Government of the Kingdom of Serbia in 1917, and a copy of that document was also displayed at the exhibition because it a testimony of Serbia's attitude towards Jews and the permanent support to the Jewish community in Serbia.

### The presence of VIP guests

The opening ceremony was attended by the greater part of the diplomatic and consular corps (38 out of 192 diplomats from the UN member states) who were

welcomed by the Mission of the Republic of Serbia in the UN and the Consulate General in New York. According to the records of the Mission of the Republic of Serbia in the UN, there was a number of diplomats from our region at the ambassador level (23), as well as from the EU member countries, from Africa, Asia and Latin America. According to the report of the Mission, the diplomats at the ambassador level were from Germany, Switzerland, Argentina, Monaco, Kazakhstan, Lichtenstein, Belarus, Georgia, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro, Honduras, Cambodia, Trinidad and Tobago, Thailand, Cuba, Kenya, Benin, Burundi, Tonga and Paraguay. The guests at the deputy ambassador level came from India, Brazil, Canada, the Russian Federation, Armenia, Poland, Pakistan, Hungary, Fiji, Venezuela, and there were also the representatives of the USA, Italy, Israel, the Holy Chair, the Dominican Republic, Ethiopia, as well as the Secretariat and different departments of the UN.

There were representatives of the Serbian diaspora, while the leaders of the World Jewish Congress from New York met Minister Dačić in Rome and the General Counsel Menachem Rosen-saft and Chief of the Cabinet of President Lauder, D. Radomski, visited the exhibition on 31 January 2018, at the central ceremony on the occasion of the Holocaust Remembrance Day, which was opened by UN Secretary General, António Guterres.

### Education of young people about the Holocaust and genocide in the Second World War

The opening ceremony was also attended by the best students from the Universities in Belgrade and New York, who participated in the preparation

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of the exhibition and contributed to its realization, including PhD student Dejan Jovanović from the Faculty of Political Sciences in Belgrade. For the needs of the exhibition, the leaders of the Union of Jewish Municipalities in Serbia, President Robert Sabadoš, Secretary General Danijela Danon, who

had given the personal belongings of brutally killed Rabbi Daniel Isaac Danon from her family's private archives, then Rabbi Asiel Isaac, Vladimir Cizelj, PhD, Nenad Fogel, as well as the representatives of the Museum of Donja Gradina, the Museum of the City of Belgrade and many other institutions and

EXHIBITION "Jasenovac – the Right to Remembrance", in the House of the National Assembly of Serbia, from 28 April to 9 May 2017, the Victory Day over fascism



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Photo 27: The painting exhibition in the House of the National Assembly – the testimonies of the victims converted into the paintings of academic artist, Professor Dragan Jelovac, and the great "weeping gate", which was placed by the Ethnographic Museum and the National Theatre – 6 metres high and 16 metres long – with the written names of 20,000 children brutally killed in Jasenovac





Photo 28: One of the total of 30 sculptures by academic sculptors Ljubiša Mančić and Katarina Tripković from the exhibition "Jasenovac – the Right to Remembrance", displayed in the House of the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia as integral part of the exhibition "Jasenovac – the Right to Remembrance"



Photo 29: The students of the First, Zemun and Fourth Belgrade Grammar Schools, eye to eye with the atrocities in Jasenovac

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Photo 30: The address of Jelena Buhač Radojčić, whose life story from Jasenovac served as the basis for the film "Dara from Jasenovac", at the Great public lesson about Jasenovac, at the ceremony of closing the exhibition on 9 May 2017, the Victory Day over fascism and Victory of Europe Day.


individuals gave an immeasurable contribution by donating books and brochures that were taken to the Library of the United Nations.

In fact, the exhibition "Jasenovac – the Right to Remembrance" has been staged, on the whole or in segments, in the following places: 1) the Faculty of Philosophy, 2) Andrić Institute, 3) the House of the National Assembly of Serbia, 4) the Gallery in Hoboken, New Jersey, the USA, 5) the United Nations in New York, 6) the Ethnographic Museum in Belgrade, 7) the Museum "Kragujevac October", 8) the National Museum in Kraljevo, 9) "Ono" Academic College in Jerusalem, where the work of academic sculptress Katarina Tripković, *Jasenovac Scream*, was presented on 20 November 2019, on the occasion of the opening ceremony of the first Serbian-Jewish academic centre in the history of bilateral relations, which is called "Saint Sava and Yehuda Alkalai". On that occasion, the first memorial plaque was placed in honour of Saint Sava in the very centre of Jerusalem, while the last one was placed in 2021, at the Faculty of Law, the University in Belgrade, when the 2-ton mock-up of Jasenovac was displayed, with the accompanying exhibits from this exhibition.

### Further steps needed in the protection of the remembrance culture for the ISC victims

Some of the key results of the exhibition are: 1) the summit meeting was held between President of the Republic of Serbia Aleksandar Vučić and President of the Republic of Croatia Kolinda Grabar Kitarović, which was the first bilateral





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## PETITION TO STOP HOLOCAUST REVISIONISM

**TO: Croatian Prime Minister Andrej Plenković and Croatian President Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović**

As a supporter of the World Jewish Congress, I stand with the Jewish community in Croatia in calling for the establishment of an international historical commission on the Holocaust in Croatia.

I am concerned about what appears to be attempts to downplay the full extent of the crimes of the Ustasha regime during WWII.

Examples of this include:

- The placement of a plaque featuring "Za dom spremni," the Ustasha salute in the municipality of Jasenovac. While the plaque was presumably taken down in September 2017, the leader of a Croatian veterans group has said that it is being moved to another location.
- At the permanent exhibition of the Jasenovac camps, the history of the site presents what were concentration and death camps as mere labor camps.
- In April 2016, Croatian Minister of Culture Zlatko Hasanbegović publicly celebrated *Jasenovac—The Truth*, by the Croatian filmmaker Jakov Sedlar, which falsely presents Jasenovac as a labor camp, and claimed that the number of victims from this camp had been exaggerated.


In this time of resurgent anti-Semitism throughout Europe where Jewish communities are confronted with a renewed sense of unease and danger, it is more important than ever that governments make every effort to protect and defend their citizens, and offer an honest and accurate remembrance of their nation's past crimes against humanity.

Any ambiguity about the role of the Ustasha regime in the Holocaust erases the atrocious crimes they committed against Jews, ethnic Serbs and Roma.

It is vital to establish an international historical commission consisting of recognized international Holocaust scholars, historians, and representatives of the communities that were victimized by the Ustasha during the Holocaust. Such a commission would gather the appropriate research and set the record straight on the crimes of the Ustasha during WWII.

Such an action will send an important message to your community, to Jewish communities throughout Europe, and to other European governments who attempt to rewrite the true and painful history of WWII and the Holocaust.

Respectfully,



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visit of the Serbian President after five-years' delay, 2) for the first time, the president of Israel, i.e. Reuven Rivlin, visited the Republic of Serbia and the Republic of Croatia, 3) the Petition to

all Jews of the world was sent and the Appeal of the World Jewish Congress to the President of the Croatian Government, Andrej Plenković, and President Grabar Kitarović, to stop revisionism

and to condemn the Ustasha crimes in the ISC.<sup>[6]</sup> Segments of the petition of the World Jewish Congress to Croatia's Government to stop revisionism and condemn the Ustasha regime in the Second World War (image above)

Nowadays, after all attempts at revisionism by the state institutions in the Republic of Croatia, such as the Memorandum of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts that the Serbs should give up the "myth about Jasenovac"<sup>[7]</sup>, the publication of the book in the State Archives of the Republic of Croatia which claims that the Serbs "*in fact carried out the genocide over the Croats*"<sup>[8]</sup>, as well as the recent prohibition of the visit of the Republic of Serbia Aleksandar Vučić to Jasenovac<sup>[9]</sup>, a conclusion can be drawn that points to the necessity of adopting the Resolution about Ustasha Genocide in the ISC in Serbia's National Assembly, which was initiated by the children survivors from Jasenovac and presented by Smilja Tišma, the oldest MP of the 12<sup>th</sup> convocation of the Assembly and the founder of the Association of Jasenovac Camp Inmates (7 December 2021), and also the necessity of an international recognition of the genocide over Serbs through a Resolution in the UN. The Resolution would serve as a lightning rod against history revision, with the intensified education, publication of books and

films about the suffering of Serbs, Jews and Roma in the ISC, so that no one could ever "prohibit" the dignified remembrance of the victims of the Holocaust and genocide in the ISC, where the "Ustasha final solution", initiated in Gudovac, near Bjelovar, on 28 April 1941, as many as six months earlier than the "Nazi final solution" in Babyn Yar. The international recognition of the Ustasha genocide in the ISC would lead to the genocide being recorded in world historiography, while the Ustasha ideology, together with the Nazi ideology and Fascism, would be described in historical textbooks worldwide as one of the deadliest ideologies of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Without unveiling the suffering in the ISC, the history of the Holocaust and genocide in the Second World War is not complete. In that respect, among other things, for the purpose of the development of understanding, reconciliation and good neighbourhood relations in the region, it is also necessary to support the academic circles and encourage them to write about it, as well as the efforts of anti-Fascist organizations and the Association of Survivor Camp Inmates, so that "Jasenovac Oath" should be kept "IT MUST NOT BE FORGOTTEN", in order to help new generations in the Balkans to foster the remembrance culture and keep the legacy "JASENOVAC – NEVER AGAIN".

[6] The petition and the appeal Congress of the World Jewish Congress from 2018. after the United Nations exhibition about Jasenovac

[7] <https://www.politika.rs/scc/clanak/508354/Memorandum-hrvatskih-akademika-opasan-diktat-i-ucena>

[8] <https://www.republika.rs/svet/region/373945/stjepan-lozo-homogena-srbija-1941>

[9] <https://www.euronews.rs/srbija/politika/55860/hrvatska-nije-odobrila-vucicu-posetu-jasenovcu-ostre-reakcije-beograda-selakovic-ovo-je-zastrasujuca-oduka/vest>

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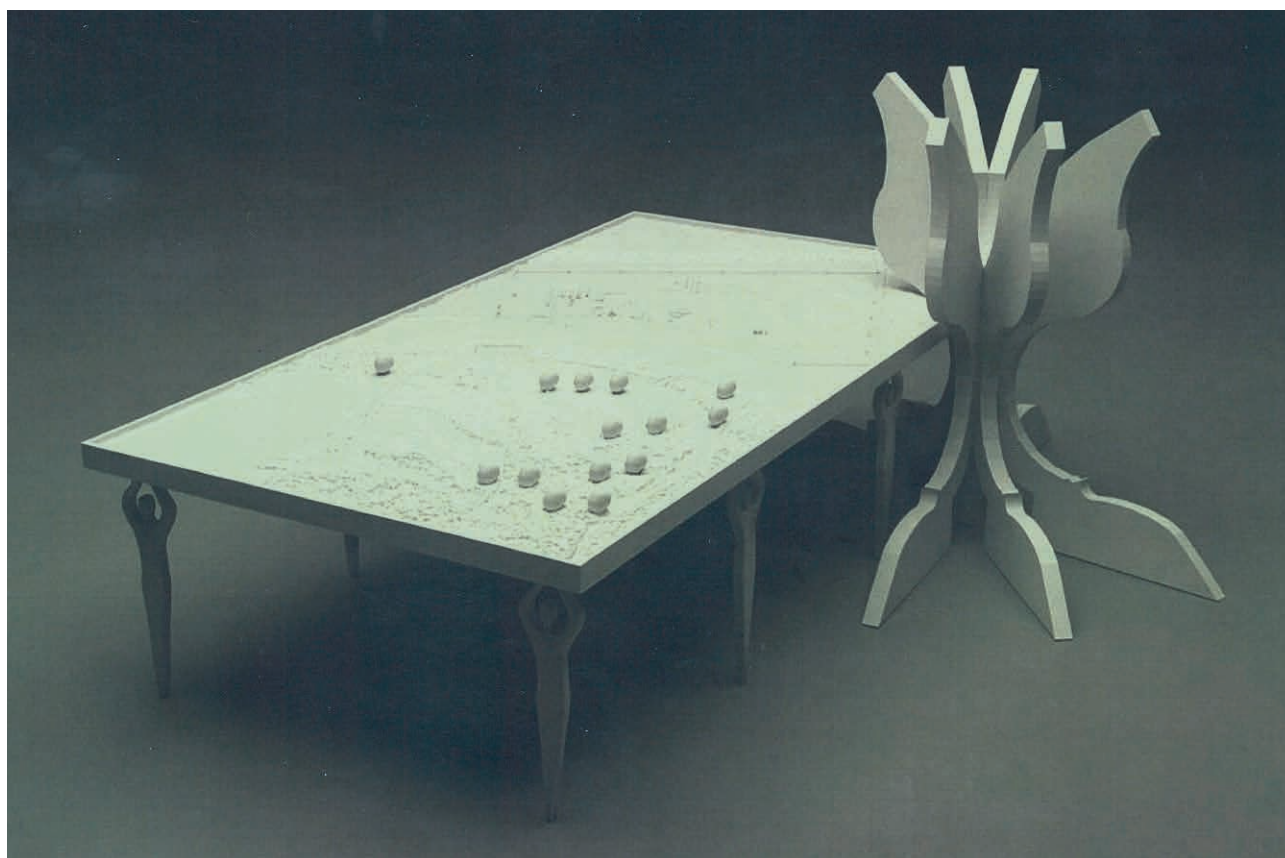


Photo 31: The multimedia model of Jasenovac weighs two tons, shows the area of the Jasenovac camp of 240 km<sup>2</sup>, six times larger than Auschwitz