

IT+ HOLOCAUST

Luxembourg has unfinished Holocaust issues - US envoy

New working group to look for ways to solve remaining issues

YANNICK LAMBERT
05.02.2019



US special envoy Tom Yazdgerdi on 5 February 2018 in Luxembourg City

Photo: Lex Kleren

Luxembourg still has to clear some hurdles to fully compensate Holocaust victims, a US diplomat told the *Luxembourg Times*, and a new group cooperating with the Jewish community will set out to solve these issues.

Luxembourg in 2015 apologised for its role in persecuting Jews under the German occupation, and US special envoy for Holocaust issues Tom Yazdgerdi conceded that the country had already done a lot to come to terms with the legacy of the Holocaust.

But some work still needed to be done, including solving the issue of dormant bank accounts of mostly foreign Jewish victims, that still contain assets that have never been restituted.

When Hitler acceded to power in the 1930s, a lot of German Jews fled to Luxembourg from the Nazi regime, and many of the assets of these foreigners were taken from them, Yazdgerdi said.

"I've come here to discuss to discuss with high-level officials, including the prime minister, some of the unfinished business of the Holocaust that we're hoping Luxembourg can resolve", he said.

"There's specifically issues with dormant bank accounts that we're looking at with the government and there's a bill in parliament to resolve this."

Yazdgerdi, a career diplomat in the US foreign service, has agreed with Prime Minister Xavier Bettel to form a working group with the government, the World Jewish Restitution Organization

Editor's Picks

HOLIDAY — 02.02.2019
Update: Weekend skiing close to home

IT+ MOBILITY — 01.02.2019
Luxembourg shops for cars as world lauds public transport plan

FINANCIAL SERVICES — 01.02.2019
EU finance watchdogs strike UK deal to avoid Brexit chaos

IT+ FINANCE — 01.02.2019
Banks in Luxembourg mull joint regulatory reporting hub

ACTING — 01.02.2019
Vicky Krieps gets top German TV prize

LUXEMBOURG TIMES

SIGN UP FOR YOUR
FREE NEWSLETTERS

Get the Luxembourg Times
delivered to your inbox twice a day

Your Email ..

Community feels safe

Yazdgerdi said he had also met the president of the *Consistoire Israélite du Luxembourg* and the head of the *Fondation pour la Mémoire de la Shoa* in Luxembourg to receive their input.

"In Europe in general there's a rising tide of antisemitism," he said. "Here the local Jewish community feels safe."

"Luxembourg has done a lot to come to terms with the legacy of the Holocaust, both in terms of memory, commemorating the Holocaust, compensating survivors and their families, and others, for this horrific historical act", he said.

A monument dedicated to the victims of Nazism in Luxembourg City last year could have come earlier, but it was still an important signal.



Yazdgerdi speaking to *Luxembourg Times* and *Luxemburger Wort* journalists

Photo: Lex Kleren

Education on the topic was equally important, Yazdgerdi said, citing a recent study [showcasing ignorance around the Holocaust](#).

"Every country has unfinished business, no country has resolved every aspect of their history and Holocaust-era issues. Just like Americans need to address the period of slavery or what happened to native Americans – it is never going to be perfect justice. It is some recognition of what happened and every government should share that feeling".

Yazdgerdi works as the special envoy for Holocaust issues in Europe, which is a regular appointment of the US State Department.

Luxembourg is a member of the International Holocaust Remembrance Association and "will assume its chairmanship in March" to advance Holocaust education, remembrance and research worldwide.
