

Remarks by the Ambassador of Israel to Finland, H.E. Ms. Hagit Ben-Yaakov
at the commemoration event for the eight deported Jewish refugees
in Helsinki on 5th November 2020

Excellencies,
Distinguished Guests,
Rakkaat Ystävät,

It is a great honour for me to participate in this memorial event and to greet you on behalf of the State of Israel and the Embassy of Israel in Helsinki.

Let me take this opportunity to thank the Jewish community of Helsinki and Finland for organizing this annual event and all of you for being here tonight.

Today, we are standing here to remember the tragic events that took place here in Helsinki 78 years ago.

Years may pass, but the memory of those eight Jewish refugees deported from the near-by harbour to Auschwitz should never be forgotten.

“Hands pleading for help” is the name of this memorial monument and a powerful reminder of the tragic fate of those individuals.

At the time, there was no one who would have joined the hands of those innocent people desperately pleading for help. No one.

Today, we are living in a different world and different times.

I want to believe that the existence of the State of Israel and the rising awareness and international cooperation against anti-Semitism, racism and xenophobia will ensure the security and welfare of Jewish communities and individuals around the world.

Together, as an international community, we can and we should ensure that the history does not repeat itself.

Only that way, we can change the future.

Kiitos.