

Contact: [info@3GMiami.org](mailto:info@3GMiami.org)  
For Immediate Release

## Grandchildren of Holocaust Survivors from Across the United States Urge Swift Senate Confirmation of Dr. Deborah Lipstadt as Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism

*Letter from organizations advocating on behalf of as many as 1 million descendants of Holocaust survivors cites Special Envoy's central role in the global fight against antisemitism and Holocaust denial*

**Washington, DC, February 7, 2022** — Nine organizations from across the country representing grandchildren of Holocaust survivors sent a [letter](#) today to Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Robert Menendez (D-NJ) and Ranking Member James E. Risch (R-ID) urging the swift confirmation of Dr. Deborah Lipstadt to ensure that the position of Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism does not remain vacant any longer. In a first-of-its-kind national effort, the organizations – from Washington, DC; Arizona; Boston, MA; Los Angeles, CA; Miami, FL; New Jersey; New York, NY; Philadelphia, PA; and San Francisco, CA – came together to express their strong support for confirming Dr. Deborah Lipstadt, who will testify before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee [tomorrow](#) at 10:00am EST.

The nine organizations that signed the letter engage nearly 10,000 active community members who together represent as many as 1 million American descendants of Holocaust survivors. An alarming [2020 survey](#) found that nearly two in three young Americans could not identify basic facts about the Holocaust. Abroad, some nations are actively seeking to rewrite history and even criminalizing the research and publication of scholarship about the Holocaust. The letter's authors point out that the position of Special Envoy will not only help ensure that the United States is leading the fight against global antisemitism, but it will also be key to exposing dangerous Holocaust denial abroad and marshalling world leaders to prevent its spread.

“The work of confirming a Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism ought to be nonpartisan and unhindered,” **the letter states**. “This position is too important to be subjected to politics or political maneuvering. This is especially true when vile antisemitism and shocking Holocaust denial and ignorance are challenging American society, American democracy, and America’s mission around the world. That is why we are so deeply concerned by this vacancy and why we are tracking this confirmation process very closely. Dr. Lipstadt is eminently qualified and internationally respected, and we ask that you do everything in your power to rally the Senate to action so that she can be confirmed without further delay.”

"Our grandparents survived one of the darkest periods of humanity, and we are determined never to allow the Holocaust to be forgotten or for antisemitism again to spread unchecked," **said 3GDC President Elana Rosenfield**. "With antisemitism, Holocaust denial, and Holocaust ignorance dangerously on the rise worldwide, it is essential that our country have a Special Envoy in place to address these challenges and help educate a new generation. Grandchildren of Holocaust survivors here in our nation's capital and across the country are looking to the Senate to confirm Dr. Lipstadt without further delay."

“We’ve all heard the saying: ‘We must never forget so that it never happens again,’” **said 3GAZ Founder Adena Astrowsky**. “I believe that my generation holds the power of ‘Never Again’ by making sure the next generation will indeed ‘Never Forget.’ As third-generation Holocaust survivors, we feel a sense of duty to memorialize the details of our grandparents’ survival and ensure their legacies are not forgotten. Fighting antisemitism is critical today and is a priority for us as grandchildren of Holocaust survivors and

as Jewish Americans. We believe Dr. Deborah Lipstadt is the right person to lead this fight and we hope confirming her nomination to be U.S. Special Envoy is as high a priority for you as it is for us.”

“We, the third generation, have a sense of duty, a burden of responsibility on our shoulders; a mission in life to ensure that our grandparents struggle, their survival, their courage was not in vain,” said [Boston 3G President Lisa Einstein](#).

“The Holocaust is not just Jewish history, it is human history,” said [Jordanna Gessler, VP of Education and Exhibits, Holocaust Museum LA and 3GLA Co-Chair](#). “As a community for grandchildren of Holocaust survivors at Holocaust Museum LA, it is our responsibility to remember, it is our responsibility to educate, and it is our responsibility to inspire. Holocaust denial and distortion is a critical contemporary issue with the growth of unchecked social media; now is a critical time to combat Holocaust denial, and confirming Dr. Lipstadt’s appointment is a step in doing so. What we do matters, and education helps us to close the gaps that divide us.”

“With the alarming increase in antisemitism and Holocaust denial, confirmation of Dr. Lipstadt’s appointment must not be delayed,” said [3GNJ co-chairs Elyse Wolff, Jessica Wang, and Michelle Edgar](#). “Her qualifications and experience make her the ideal choice at this crucial point.”

“As grandchildren of Holocaust survivors, we embrace our enormous responsibility as the last living link to the Holocaust,” said [3GNY Executive Director Dave Reckess](#). “Today we stand proudly with thousands of grandchildren of survivors across the U.S., united in our vision of a world free of antisemitism. But we cannot do it alone. Confirming Deborah Lipstadt is a critical and overdue step by our elected leaders to support our mission and ensure we live up to the vow of ‘never again.’”

“Never again, not to any group of people. As 3Gs we would not be here if our grandparents had not survived the Holocaust. We recognize through shared first hand stories from our grandparents how things can escalate,” said [Co- Founders of 3GMiami Stephanie Rosen and Julie Paresky](#). “As our grandparents said and we believe, if it happened once, it CAN happen again. Dr. Lipstadt has outstanding credentials and experience to be a highly effective leader and change-maker as Special Envoy to address and combat the growing Antisemitic challenges today. We strongly support her for this position and look to the Senate to confirm without delay.”

“As grandchildren of Holocaust survivors, our families are the direct victims of the most aggressive antisemitism in human history and we are honored to share our grandparents’ stories in order to advance our mission of fighting antisemitism and upholding the pledge of ‘never again,’” said [3GPhilly Founder Stacy Bratt Seltzer](#). “The rise of antisemitism in Europe and the dictatorship of one man led to the death of six million Jewish people. We must learn from this time. We must have a Special Envoy in place to ensure education on this topic continues and to monitor and combat antisemitism. We request that the Senate confirms the appointment of Dr. Lipstadt.”

“Time and time again, Dr. Deborah Lipstadt has proven her commitment to educating the world on the dangers of antisemitism,” said [Penny Savryn, Education & Marketing Manager, 3gSF, A Program of the JFCS Holocaust Center](#). “The JFCS Holocaust Center in San Francisco is proud to have worked closely with her in this effort. Grandchildren of Holocaust survivors rely on not only national and global recognition of Holocaust remembrance, but also on action taken against the urgent threat of antisemitism.”

**To read the letter in full, please see below:**

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February 7, 2022

The Hon. Robert Menendez  
Chairman  
U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations  
423 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Hon. James E. Risch  
Ranking Member  
U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations  
423 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Menendez & Ranking Member Risch:

Tomorrow, you will preside over a hearing on the nomination of Dr. Deborah Lipstadt to serve as Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism, with the rank of Ambassador. As organizations representing the grandchildren of Holocaust survivors across the United States, we are writing to thank you for scheduling this hearing and to urge that the Committee take swift action to ensure that the position of Special Envoy does not remain vacant any longer than necessary. At a time when dangerous and violent antisemitism is rising at an alarming rate both in our country and around the world, it is essential that a Special Envoy be confirmed in office to ensure that the United States is leading the fight against global antisemitism and Holocaust denial.

With a shared historic mission to bear witness on behalf of our grandparents and our families, our organizations engage nearly 10,000 active community members who together represent as many as 1 million American descendants of Holocaust survivors. Our families endured the brutality of Nazism; many still bear the invisible scars of intergenerational trauma resulting from those darkest days of human history. Our organizations have pledged to carry on the work of our grandparents, who emerged from the death camps, ghettos, and hiding places or who fled their homes as refugees and mustered the courage to tell their stories and convey the lessons of the Holocaust. Today, our volunteers speak in classrooms, organize remembrance programs, and advocate for human rights and tolerance in our communities across America, sharing personal family testimony about how easily hatred and bigotry can transform into violence and genocide.

From the horrific attacks targeting synagogues in Pennsylvania, California, Kansas, Texas, and other states in recent years to the use of antisemitic hate-speech in our national discourse, from the desecration of Jewish communal spaces with swastikas to the proliferation online of images and content that denies or minimizes the Holocaust, it is no surprise that Jewish people and communities in our country and around the world are enduring levels of fear unseen since the 1940's. A 2020 survey found that nearly two in three young Americans could not identify basic facts about the Holocaust; abroad, some nations in Europe are actively seeking to rewrite history and even criminalizing the research and publication of scholarship about the Holocaust. Central to the Special Envoy's role is exposing dangerous Holocaust denial abroad and marshalling world leaders to prevent its spread.

The work of confirming a Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism ought to be nonpartisan and unhindered. This position is too important to be subjected to politics or political maneuvering. This is especially true when vile antisemitism and shocking Holocaust denial and ignorance are challenging American society, American democracy, and America's mission around the world. That is why we are so deeply concerned by this vacancy and why we are tracking this confirmation process very closely. Dr. Lipstadt is eminently qualified and internationally respected, and we ask that you do everything in your power to rally the Senate to action so that she can be confirmed without further delay.

We, the third-generation survivors, owe it to our grandparents to make certain that the lessons of the Holocaust are not forgotten by Americans today or by generations to follow. As leaders of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, you owe it to the generation of brave Americans who sacrificed so much liberating our families from the horrors of Nazism to ensure that their sacrifices were not in vain, that the evil ideology they defeated does not rise again to threaten the peace and justice of our nation and of our world. We hope that tomorrow's hearing will be the first step in bringing Dr. Lipstadt's confirmation process to a swift and positive conclusion.

Sincerely,

Elana Rosenfield, 3GDC

Adena Astrowsky, 3GAZ

Lisa Einstein, Boston3G

Jordanna Gessler, 3GLA

Stephanie Rosen & Julie Paresky, 3GMiami

Michelle Edgar, 3GNJ

David Wachs, 3GNY

Stacy Bratt Seltzer, 3GPhilly

Penny Savryn, 3GSF