

Publication: The Jerusalem Post (online)
 Date: 21.05.2020
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THE JERUSALEM POST

150 rabbis commemorate 75th anniversary of Jewish liberation from Nazis

Chief Rabbis and senior officials from around the Jewish world paid tribute to the allied forces who liberated Jews in Europe, and to Jewish soldiers who fell in World War II

By JEREMY SHARON MAY 21, 2020 18:30



Religious Services Minister Ya'akov Avitan (second right) and former chief rabbi Yisrael Meir Lau (middle).
 (photo credit: ELI ITIKIN)





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More than 150 rabbis around the world, including chief rabbis and senior community leaders, participated in an online celebration of the 75th anniversary of the [liberation of Jews](#) from Nazi control at the end of the Second World War.

The Day of Salvation and Liberation, as it has been designated, marks the Jewish calendar date of 26 Iyar, which in 1945 was [May 9](#), the day marked by the Soviet Union as Victory in Europe Day.

The commemorative event, which took place this week, began with a collective prayer at the Western Wall led by Rabbi Yisrael Meir Lau, former chief rabbi, and new Religious Services Minister Ya'akov Avitan.

Chief Sephardi Rabbi Yitzhak Yosef, Chief Rabbi of France Haïm Korsia, chairman of the Council of European Rabbis Rabbi Pinchas Goldschmidt, Rabbi Shimon Baadani of the Shas Council of Torah Sages, together with dozens of other rabbis and senior rabbinical judges from 20 countries, also took part in the prayer through an online video conference. The ceremony was also attended virtually by outgoing UN Ambassador Danny Danon and interim Ambassador to Russia Eli Belozerkovsky.

"We will never forget the soldiers of the Allies' armies and the Red Army, which liberated Auschwitz, as well as about a quarter of a million soldiers, our brothers, Jewish people, who went out and did not return," said Lau at the event.





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Goldschmidt said that until recently there had never been an appropriate date to say the kaddish mourners prayer for Jews who fought in the Second World War for the Allied forces, and that the Day of Salvation and Liberation was now a fitting commemoration to do so.

The initiative to commemorate the day has been the project of Russian-Jewish businessman and vice president of the Russian Jewish Congress German Zakharyayev, and is now in its seventh year.

Israel formally commemorates VE Day on the secular date of May 9, after a decision to mark the day was adopted by the Knesset in 2017.

“The Nazis wanted to destroy and kill, but the world of the Torah rose to its feet, and in Israel, a flourishing world of Torah came together from around the exiles of the world of Torah with thousands of wise students sitting and thinking in the Torah,” said Yosef in an online address to the video-conference participants.

“That which those beasts tried did not succeed. Although one-third of our people were brutally annihilated, the Lord showed pity on the rest of his people.”

Tags [yitzhak yosef](#) [nazi](#) [world war ii](#)

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