

**Twenty eighth special session of the United Nations General Assembly
“Commemoration of the sixtieth anniversary
of the liberation of the Nazi concentration camps”
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Statement by

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to the United Nations**

Just outside the capital of Belarus there is a little village of Maly Trascianec. The Nazis built their fourth largest extermination camp there. More than 200 thousand people's lives perished in that place. Tragically, not one of its prisoners saw the light of liberation – the Nazis completely destroyed the camp in an attempt to cover up any trace of their atrocities.

The people of Belarus, the country which during the last world war lost its every fourth citizen, remain extremely sensitive to the legacy of that war. This legacy is a living one.

It lives in our memory about the old men, women and children of 619 Belarusian villages which were burnt alive by the SS death squads.

It lives in our firm belief that peace is the ultimate life value. One may call it idealistic but Belarusians are passionately anti-war.

It lives in our deep concern that in the modern world the plague of man-hating, ideas of ethnic exclusiveness and superiority are not dead yet.

It lives in our sorrow that centuries long temptations of the big and powerful to make a victorious blitzkrieg now and then have not yet given way to realisation of the simple truth that bad peace is better than a good quarrel.

One may ridicule a common Belarusian saying – “may there be anything but war”. Yet when we recall the unimaginable plight of prisoners of the Nazi concentration camps we may give a second thought to the wisdom of the people who may be low on their life expectations but who are undoubtedly high on awareness that any peaceful solution is better than the horror of war.

If one day the tragic lessons of the war long gone quietly pass into the domain of history, mankind will fail its ultimate test in humanity.