

**Federal Chancellor's speech, 6 May  
Wreath-laying ceremony at the Monument Against War and  
Fascism**

Mr Federal President,  
ladies and gentlemen,

Over the past few weeks I have had many conversations  
with survivors of the holocaust.

An old Jewish adage from one of those conversations  
has stayed with me;  
it says that:  
the **secret of redemption** lies  
in **remembrance**.

Only those who remember  
can acknowledge the horrors of history.

Only those who remember  
can learn from the mistakes of the past.

Only those who remember  
can do better today and in the future.

And that is precisely why we, the federal government,  
also want to remember the darker chapters of our history  
in this special memorial year.

That is why this year, for the first time,  
we are holding this act of remembrance  
for the victims of National Socialism  
at the Monument Against War and Fascism.

73 years ago yesterday

Mauthausen concentration camp was liberated.

Mauthausen is the place

where National Socialism in Austria  
probably showed its ugliest face.

We must never forget

that conditions in Mauthausen  
were seen as particularly inhumane.

We must never forget

that almost 100,000 people were killed there:

People with disabilities,

Roma and Sinti, homosexuals,  
people with different political views  
and resistance fighters.

Above all, however, we must never forget

that a large number of Jewish fellow citizens  
were tortured and killed in Mauthausen

in the most atrocious way.

I can very clearly remember  
my first visit  
to the Mauthausen Memorial.

To this day, I am still shaken  
by the level of cruelty  
endured by the people there.

The former concentration camp at Mauthausen  
is a fateful place for Austria.

It reminds us  
that between 1938 and 1945  
Austrians were victims,  
but also perpetrators.

However, it also embodies a mission for us all,  
left to us by the survivors of the concentration camp.

After their liberation,  
the former prisoners swore an oath  
committing themselves  
not to revenge or retaliation  
but to understanding between peoples and to justice.

Despite all the suffering  
that they had experienced,  
they had not lost their belief  
that a positive future was possible.

They formulated a core objective  
that is still valid for us today:

*On the safe foundations of international community,  
we want to build the finest monument  
to honour the fallen soldiers of freedom:  
THE WORLD OF FREE HUMAN BEINGS.*

This oath  
is both a legacy and a mission for us.

We must bring this legacy to life  
and pass it on to future generations.

Only when all people in the world  
can live in freedom  
is the monument of Mauthausen's survivors  
completed.