

Good evening to all our friends who gathered here tonight,

It is an honor and a pleasure for me to stand here before you this evening in the company of old friends, as well as new supporters, and bring you the greetings of the Ghetto Fighters' Museum and its staff. I am glad to see all of you, and among you- Jack Topal, the treasurer of the American Friends, who just two weeks ago was honored at the Museum by lighting a torch on Yom Hashoah.

This year we are celebrating the sixtieth anniversary of the State of Israel, the homeland of the Jewish people and the realization of its dreams. We are also marking the sixty-fifth anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising, which is the foundation and inspiration of Jewish pride and courage for three generations now.

The Museum's educational and ideological focus has been on the connection between the Holocaust and the resistance, representing the memory of the past, and the establishment of the State of Israel, which represents revival and renewal. There is nothing more fitting than to mark the work of the Ghetto Fighters' Museum at this dinner, which is taking place only days after the celebration of Israel's Independence Day.

This year we inaugurated a new wing at the Museum, which uses state-of-the-art exhibitions to display the special connection between the past, the present and the future. I hope that everyone present here this evening will come to Israel in the coming year; you all have an open invitation to visit the Ghetto Fighters' Museum at any time.

As we were hard at work on the new wing, we continued to develop new educational programs for students, educators, the police, and first and foremost, for the educational arm of the Israel Defense Forces.

The IDF is the lodestone marking the strength of the State of Israel, emphasizing the moral principles and meaning instilled in us by the Holocaust. We at the Museum are very proud that the IDF considers us a most important site for education for values.

It is my honor and pleasure to introduce Maj.-Gen. Benny Gantz, the Israeli Military Attaché to the United States. Maj.-Gen. Gantz served a significant portion of his military service in the Northern Command in high command positions. In every position he served, he strengthened and expanded the relationship between the IDF and the Ghetto Fighters' Museum. Benny Gantz is a member of the second generation of Holocaust survivors, and we were honored and privileged to have his mother and him light a torch at the Ghetto Fighters' Museum Yom Hashoah ceremony in the past. It was a very moving experience to see a Holocaust survivor lighting a torch with her son, a respected and admired General in the Israeli army.

Maj.-Gen. Gantz is a true friend of the Ghetto Fighters' Museum and is committed to the Museum's needs and activities. It is truly an honor and a pleasure for me to invite a friend and commander, and in my opinion, Israel's next Chief of Staff, to speak to you tonight.

Thank you and good evening.

