

In December 2014, Mr. Andreas Loverdos, Minister of Education and Religious Affairs, participated in the special European Symposium focused on establishing a European teaching network on Shoah education.

Mr. Loverdos made the following remarks in his speech:

“First I would like to thank the Italian Minister of Education, University and Research for organizing this very important event. Our presence here today emphasizes the importance that we attach to this European Symposium aiming at establishing a European teaching network on Shoah education (the Holocaust). The Greek people have had the experience of the Armenian genocide in 1915. When the first Jews were assembled by the Germans we perceived what was going to happen. The provinces of Northern Greece have lost the total of their Jewish population. However, in Athens and in Southern Greece thousands of Jews have been saved thanks to the self-sacrifice of their Christian compatriots. Greece has been the first country to vote a special law on Jewish property that had been transferred during the occupation to be returned to the original owner. If the original owner had deceased, then the property was attributed to the Jewish community. In Greece Jewish communities are organized as bodies governed by public law enjoying public law protection. This has been done by our fathers. Today we ought to do the following: First to ensure that the racist discourse ceases to be attractive. Secondly, we need to maintain the historical memory of the Holocaust. Young people will thus be faced with the question of what kind of people they want to be. One of our fundamental policies is the annual visit of non-Jewish students to the Auschwitz Museum within the context of teaching about the Holocaust. Thirdly, we need to work together to ensure that the new generation of Europeans is aware of what their grandparents did. In this way, if necessary, they will do everything possible to avert such a tragedy.”