

Weekly Top 10



NCSEJ CEO Mark Levin at the World Holocaust Forum in Jerusalem
President of Georgia, Salome Zourabichvili and Georgian Ambassador
to Israel, Lasha Zhvania



NCSEJ CEO Mark Levin at the World Holocaust Forum in Jerusalem with Kazakh Ambassador to Israel, Satybaldy Burshakov,



NCSEJ Deputy Director Lesley Weiss and her mother, Holocaust survivor Irene Weiss met with Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Representatives Brad Schneider, Susan Davis, and Joe Wilson, in the Speaker's office before their participation in the 75th commemoration of the Liberation of Auschwitz in Poland and Israel.



NCSEJ Deputy Director Lesley Weiss and her mother, Holocaust survivor Irene Weiss met with Speaker Nancy Pelosi

.WASHINGTON, D.C. January 24, 2020

TO: NCSEJ Leadership and Interested Parties

**FROM: Daniel Rubin, Chairman;
Aleksander Smukler, President;
Mark B. Levin, Executive Vice-Chairman & CEO**

Dear Friend,

This week NCSEJ participated in major events in honor of International Holocaust Remembrance Day and the 75th Commemoration of the liberation of Auschwitz.

CEO Mark Levin joined Heads of State and Jewish leadership from around the world for the Fifth World Holocaust Forum on 23 January 2020 in Jerusalem. The event, entitled [“Remembering the Holocaust: Fighting Antisemitism,”](#) was under the auspices of Israel President Reuven Rivlin in cooperation with Yad Vashem and the World Holocaust Forum Foundation, headed by European Jewish Congress President Moshe Kantor.

In Jerusalem, Mark had an opportunity to meet with the U.S. congressional delegation led by Speaker Pelosi. He also met with Israel Knesset Speaker Yuli Edelstein and other international leaders including the President of Georgia, and representatives of the global Jewish community.

At a separate event, Russian President Vladimir Putin and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu presided over the unveiling of the [Leningrad Siege Heroes Monument](#) in Jerusalem -- also known as the Candle of Remembrance.

The project is under the sponsorship of The Euro Asian Jewish Congress, the Russian Jewish Congress, Viktor Vekselberg and others.

Deputy Director Lesley Weiss is in Poland traveling as a member of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) delegation to Auschwitz to be held on January 27. Her mother, Irene Weiss, an Auschwitz survivor, is the only survivor on the 20-person USHMM delegation, which includes members of the US Holocaust Memorial Council and Museum Director Sara Bloomfield. Organized by the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum, over 200 survivors will participate in the commemoration supported by the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial Foundation under the leadership of Ronald Lauder, President, World Jewish Congress.

Lesley and her mother were invited to meet with Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Congressional members of her delegation at the Speaker’s office prior to their trip to Israel and Poland. Irene spoke about her experience in Auschwitz and Lesley discussed anti-Semitism in the region.

Sincerely,

Mark B. Levin
NCSEJ Executive Vice-Chairman & CEO

NCSEJ WEEKLY TOP 10
Washington, D.C. January 24, 2020

Bulgaria set to expel two Russian diplomats over espionage
Tsvetelia Tsoleva and Angel Krasimirov
Reuters | January 24, 2020

SOFIA (Reuters) - Bulgaria is likely to expel two Russian diplomats who prosecutors suspect were involved in spying in the Balkan country, its Foreign Minister Ekaterina Zaharieva said on Friday. EU and NATO member Bulgaria, which traditionally keeps close links to Russia, expelled another diplomat over espionage allegations in October and declined to grant a visa to Russia's incoming defense attache.

"We have received letters from the prosecutors with the allegations," said Zaharieva. "We will undertake the action that we are obliged to undertake and will most probably declare them 'persona non grata'."

[Read the full article here.](#)

World leaders convene in Jerusalem to remember Holocaust and counter anti-Semitism
Steve Hendrix, Ruth Eglash and Ashley Parker
The Washington Post | January 23, 2020

JERUSALEM — Leaders from almost 50 countries condemned anti-Semitism old and new here Thursday, using the 75th anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz concentration camp to mount a united stand against the resurgence of anti-Jewish sentiment around the world.

Vice President Pence and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi were among the dignitaries gathered at Yad Vashem, Israel's somber memorial to the Holocaust's 6 million Jewish victims, for the World Holocaust Forum, one of the largest international events ever hosted by the country.

Leaders of World War II's Allied powers addressed the body, which included about 100 of the fast-dwindling number of Holocaust survivors, warning that the hatred that fostered the industrial murder of the Jewish people is festering again and manifesting itself in incidents both trivial and terrorizing, from swastikas painted on gravestones to mass shootings at synagogues.

[Read the full article here.](#)

Putin's Top-Down Revolution
Maxim Trudolyubov
Riddle.io | January 17, 2020

In a momentous day for Russia's politics, the Russian government resigned January 15 following President Vladimir Putin's announcement of an array of changes to the country's constitution. If implemented, the proposed redistribution of powers between the branches of government would compare in scale to that of 1993, when the current constitution was adopted.

Effectively, Russia will get a new constitution sometime later this year. The paradox of the proposed change, though, is that it is meant to preserve the status quo, whereby Putin remains Russia's paramount leader for the indefinite future.

Mikhail Mishustin, the quiet technocrat who is head of Russia's tax service, is going to be Russia's next prime minister. Mishustin has been the Federal Tax Service chief since 2010 and has led a thorough digitalization of the ministry, creating an online interface for taxpayers.

Putin proposed giving more powers to Russia's parliament and prime minister while bringing the State Council, consisting of the country's highest-ranking officials and regional governors, back to prominence. Medvedev's resignation was clearly an agreed-upon change as Medvedev made his own announcement while sitting next to Putin. Medvedev will move on to become deputy head of the Security Council, a body that Putin chairs.

[Read the full article here.](#)

Russia and Belarus Haggles over Oil and Gas Prices
Grigory Ioffe
Jamestown | January 22, 2020

The stalemate continues regarding Russia's oil and natural gas prices for Belarus and the ensuing lack of long-term delivery contracts. No less newsworthy is the wide selection of opinions about the deadlocked negotiations. President Alyaksandr Lukashenka claims that Russia wants to sell Belarus oil at a higher price than the global standard. However, in reality, the entire latter-day haggling has been about a \$10-per-ton premium for Russian oil companies. As for natural gas, Lukashenka's position is that when Belarus sold its national gas pipeline Beltransgaz to Russia in 2011, Moscow gave assurances that the gas prices in five years would be equal to domestic Russian prices (Eurasia.expert, January 10, 2020). On January 11, Minsk further dug in its heels by introducing an ecological tax of 0.35 Belarusian rubles (\$0.17) to transit each ton of crude oil or oil products 100 kilometers across Belarus (Naviny.by, January 13, 2020).

[Read the full article here.](#)

Russian-Ukrainian Gas Transit Deal: A Collapse of Putin's Gas Strategy or a Temporary Retreat? (Part One)

Alla Hurska

Jamestown | January 22, 2020

On January 1, the Gas Transmission System Operator of Ukraine (GTSOU) LLC began transporting Russian natural gas to Europe under a new five-year transit agreement (Gordonua.com, January 1, 2020). This contract (consistent with European Union regulations) was signed by representatives of the Ukrainian energy firm Naftogaz, GTSOU (established in line with Kyiv's commitments to implement EU energy market "unbundling" legislation), and Gazprom on December 30, just one day before the previous ten-year gas supply and transit contract was set to expire. The issue of direct gas supplies to Ukraine was not included in the package agreements.

[Read the full article here.](#)

Belarus in the multipolar world: Lukashenka bets on himself

Yegor Vasylyev

The New Eastern Europe | January 21, 2020

Belarusian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka has set records, and not only on the number of press conferences held. Having been at the helm since 1994, he has shown a mastery of staying in the highest office, stoking envy not only in the post-Soviet space but also among political actors in some European capitals. Being diligent in fulfilling his initial pledge of providing 'bacon and vodka' (charka ishkvarka) to every Belarusian household, Lukashenka is busy with geopolitics, literally, squeezing benefits from the latest global developments for himself, and for the country under his full control.

[Read the full article here.](#)

Natan Sharansky to 'Post': 'Antisemitism is not just a Jewish problem'

Steve Linde

The Jerusalem Post | January 21, 2020

Rising antisemitism should not be seen as a primarily Jewish problem, but one that needs to be tackled by every country experiencing it, according to former Soviet dissident and Jewish Agency chairman Natan Sharansky, the newly selected 2020 Genesis Prize laureate.

"Of course, Jews, as the target of this most ancient hatred had to develop ways to protect themselves," Sharansky said in an exclusive interview with The Jerusalem Post. "The establishment of the State of Israel turned tables on the situation, when Jews finally reclaimed an opportunity to shape own future. However, if I were a European leader, I would spend day and night asking myself how come that Europe was so quick to get rid in such a cruel way of its Jews who played such an important role in creation and development of the modern liberal European society, and how is it possible that today, just one generation after Holocaust, more and more European Jews believe that neither they nor their children have a future in Europe?"

"Good words and good intentions are not enough to protect Jews from the new antisemitism rhetoric," Sharansky said. "As a very minimum, every European leader should expect from each citizen of his or her country, including new citizens, accept the fundamental principles of human rights, such as freedom and equality, that are basic for the modern European culture."

[Read the full article here.](#)

Full Text of German President's Yad Vashem Speech: We Germans Have Not Learned From History

Noa Landau

Haaretz | January 23, 2019

German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier delivered a heartfelt speech at the International Holocaust Forum in Jerusalem Thursday, lamenting his country's role in the atrocities of World War II and condemning the rise of anti-Semitism in Germany and around the globe.

[Read the full article here.](#)

Putin: Nazis' European accomplices were often 'crueler than their masters'

RAOUL WOOLLIFF and RAPHAEL AHREN

The Times of Isarel | January 23, 2020

World leaders gathered in Jerusalem on Thursday to mark 75 years since the liberation of Auschwitz, commemorating the victims of the Holocaust and vowing to confront current manifestations of anti-Semitism.

Addressing the World Holocaust Forum at Yad Vashem were representatives of the Allied powers that defeated Nazi Germany in World War II — the United States, Britain, Soviet Union and France.

Russian President Vladimir Putin called the Holocaust “one of the most terrible chapters of human history” and said remembering it “is our shared responsibility to the past and the future.”

[Read the full article here.](#)

1120 20th Street NW, Ste. 300N Washington, DC 20036-3413

Telephone: +1 202 898 2500 | ncsejinfo@ncsej.org

About NCSEJ

Founded in 1971, the National Coalition Supporting Eurasian Jewry represents the organized American Jewish community in monitoring and advocating on behalf of the estimated 1.5 million Jews in Eastern Europe and Eurasia, including the 15 successor states of the former Soviet Union.



JOIN OUR EMAIL LIST



FORWARD THIS EMAIL



Robly