# 80th anniversary of Auschwitz liberation commemorated with survivors and world leaders



The 80th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, the notorious Nazi death camp, is being commemorated today, getting significant attention as it may be the last major observance attended by a notable number of survivors. The ceremony takes place at the site in southern Poland, where, during World War II, Nazi forces systematically murdered approximately 1.1 million people, predominantly Jews, as part of an industrial-scale extermination project.

But the history of Auschwitz extends beyond the Jewish community; it also represents the murder of many Poles, Roma, Soviet prisoners of war, and members of the LGBTQ+ community, primarily gay men, among others targeted under Nazi racial policies. This grim context underscores the broad impact of the Holocaust, which resulted in the deaths of six million Jews across Europe, annihilating two-thirds of the continent's Jewish population.

Polish President Andrzej Duda participated in a poignant tribute today by lighting a candle at the Death Wall, a site within Auschwitz where numerous prisoners, including Polish resistance fighters, met their execution. Duda was accompanied by elderly survivors of the camp, many of whom required assistance from family members.

A significant aspect of today's observance is the gathering of world leaders, including German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and President Frank-Walter Steinmeier. Their dual presence marks a historical moment, as Germany has not previously sent both its highest state representatives to this poignant event. This step is perceived as an ongoing commitment to acknowledge and take responsibility for the atrocities committed during the Nazi regime, particularly as the far-right movement in Germany grows increasingly vocal in its attempts to downplay historical responsibilities.

French President Emmanuel Macron and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau are also among the dignitaries expected to attend, as is Britain's King Charles III, who will be joined by monarchs from Spain, Denmark, and Norway. Notably, Russian representatives, who traditionally held a prominent role in these ceremonies due to the Soviet liberation of the camp on January 27, 1945, have not been invited this year. This change arises in light of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

As the day unfolds, the focus remains firmly on the survivors, many of whom are now in their 80s, emphasising their pivotal experiences throughout this historic chapter. Notably, politicians will refrain from speaking during the ceremonies, allowing those who lived through the harrowing events to take centre stage in reflection and memory. In 2005, January 27 was officially designated by the United Nations as International Holocaust Remembrance Day, cementing the global commitment to remembering the victims of the Holocaust and acknowledging the profound impact of its legacy.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.auschwitz.org/en/home-page-80/> - This URL supports the claim about the 80th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau and provides information on the commemoration events.
* <https://www.auschwitz.org/en/schedule-80/> - This URL provides details about the schedule of events for the 80th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau.
* <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Auschwitz_concentration_camp> - This URL corroborates the historical context of Auschwitz as a Nazi death camp where approximately 1.1 million people were murdered.
* <https://www.un.org/en/holocaustremembrance/what-is-the-holocaust.shtml> - This URL explains the broader impact of the Holocaust, including the deaths of six million Jews across Europe.
* <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-64443921> - This URL provides news coverage of the Auschwitz liberation anniversary and the participation of world leaders.
* <https://www.dw.com/en/auschwitz-liberation-anniversary-marked-with-ceremonies/a-64614341> - This URL supports the claim about German leaders attending the ceremony, marking a significant moment in acknowledging historical responsibilities.
* <https://www.un.org/en/observances/holocaust-remembrance-day> - This URL explains the designation of January 27 as International Holocaust Remembrance Day by the United Nations in 2005.
* <https://www.britannica.com/event/Holocaust> - This URL provides detailed information about the Holocaust, including its impact on various communities targeted by Nazi policies.