85 Years After Infamous Nazi Pogrom, Holocaust Survivors Say They Once Again Feel ‘Terrified’

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<https://www.algemeiner.com/2023/11/09/85-years-after-infamous-nazi-pogrom-holocaust-survivors-say-they-once-again-feel-terrified/>

To mark the [85th anniversary of Kristallnacht](https://www.algemeiner.com/2023/11/08/as-germany-prepares-commemorate-1938-nazi-pogrom-fear-renewed-antisemitic-violence-abides/) — the infamous Nazi assault on the German Jewish community on Nov. 9-10, 1938 — the International March of the Living, a Holocaust education program, has released powerful testimonies from Holocaust survivors across the world who have expressed feeling unsafe for the second time in their lives since the Oct. 7 massacre by Hamas and the ensuing surge in antisemitism worldwide.

“I never thought in my life that something as terrible as now would happen again,” said Tirza, who survived Kristallnacht after her father was beaten and later killed by the Nazis.

“I have to say honestly, all the lectures I give, and I give a lot, in Israel, in Germany, and wherever I can, but I think back 85 years ago to how horrible it was, and here we are, experiencing it again,” she added.

In an initial copy of the testimonies obtained by *The Algemeiner*, the survivors’ full names and photographs were provided. At the request of their families and out of concern for their safety, *The Algemeiner* was asked to redact the last names and refrain from publishing their pictures.

March of the Living said in a statement that the survivors were “worried that revealing their identities could place them or their families in immediate danger.” Some reports have indicated a 500 percent increase in [attacks against Jews and Jewish communities worldwide](https://www.algemeiner.com/2023/10/25/because-youre-jewish-antisemitic-incidents-us-since-hamas-pogrom-increase-nearly-400-adl-reports/) since Oct. 7.

Dr. Shmuel Rosenman, chair of the International March of the Living, and President Phyllis Greenberg Heideman relayed the heartrending experience of listening to the survivors, sharing: “We never believed that we would once again hear a Holocaust survivor say, ‘I don’t feel safe,’ or ‘I’m afraid to go to the synagogue,’ or ‘I’m afraid they’ll hurt me.’ We never believed that we would relive those days again.”

Kristallnacht, also known as the “Night of Broken Glass,” unfolded on Nov. 9-10, 1938, when Nazi forces and German civilians destroyed Jewish homes, businesses, and synagogues, leaving at least 91 Jews dead and 30,000 Jewish men arrested and sent to concentration camps. Over 7,000 Jewish-owned stores were looted. In recent years, historians have used the term “Reichspogromnacht” — “Reich pogrom night” — instead of Kristallnacht, arguing it better encapsulates the violence.

Many synagogues and Jewish community centers have shelved plans to commemorate Kristallnacht this year out of fear of antisemitic attacks.

In a solemn reflection of past atrocities, survivors recounted their distress following the recent Hamas terrorist onslaught on Oct. 7, drawing chilling parallels to their experiences during the Holocaust.

“The Oct. 7 terror attack brought back so many memories of what I saw as a child,” said Maud, a Holocaust survivor who lives in the US. “I’ve had sleepless nights since and it just brought back so many memories. It is so visual of what I saw as a child. Now this. I don’t know how to cope, don’t know how to digest it, it’s all so difficult.”

Nate, a survivor living in Canada, recalled being attacked on the streets during Kristallnacht and hearing shouts of “dirty Jews, go to Palestine.” He went on to say that since Oct. 7, he was “struggling to retain [his] equilibrium.”

“We must collectively feel the pain felt by parents whose child is abducted and threatened with death. Hamas’ barbarism is equal and almost exceeds what I experienced during the Shoah,” he said, using the Hebrew word for Holocaust.

Hamas, the Palestinian terrorist group in control of Gaza, murdered 1,400 people, mostly civilians, during its invasion of Israel on Oct. 7 — the deadliest single-day massacre of Jews since the Holocaust. The terrorists also kidnapped over 240 people, including children and the elderly, and took them back to Gaza as hostages. Since the assault, amid the ongoing war between Israel and Hamas, there has been a [sharp global spike in incidents targeting Jews](https://www.algemeiner.com/2023/11/06/jews-once-again-living-fear-eu-decries-europe-wide-spike-antisemitism/), especially across the US and Europe.

Holocaust survivor Manya, living in the US, said: “I think twice before I wear my Star of David. I am afraid to go to the synagogue.”

Highlighting scenes of [anti-Israel sentiment sweeping college campuses](https://www.algemeiner.com/2023/11/08/new-york-university-student-arrested-allegedly-assaulting-pro-israel-demonstrator/), she went on, “Where did these college students become so agitated? How did Jews harm them? Where does it come from?”

“We are the chosen ones again [and] I am afraid.”

Ben, from the US, who survived six concentration and death camps, recounted how “horrific” it was to see “Jewish people get killed for nothing.”

“Hamas terrorists went and cut off the heads of children — that’s unbelievable,” he added.

Eva, from Canada, said she was “terrified,” and warned that the scenes unfolding around the world could “easily turn into World War III.”

Nevertheless, Eva concluded her testimony with a message of hope.

“It is hard to find the hope,” she said, “yet as Elie Wiesel explains, man cannot live without [it]. We must find the hope that Israel can defend herself, can return to democracy, and can provide the anchor we, Jews all over the world, so critically need.”