The Galilee Declaration

The participants in the Galilee Second International Workshop on Medicine after the Holocaust pledge the following:

We unequivocally support the universal principles of the 2000 Declaration of the Stockholm International Forum on the Holocaust, namely:

a. The Holocaust (Shoah) fundamentally challenged the foundations of civilization. The unprecedented character of the Holocaust will always hold universal meaning.

b. The magnitude of the Holocaust, planned and carried out by the Nazis, must be forever seared in our collective memory.

c. With humanity still scarred by genocide, ethnic cleansing, racism, anti-Semitism and xenophobia, the international community shares a solemn responsibility to fight those evils. Together we must uphold the terrible truth of the Holocaust against those who deny it. We must strengthen the moral commitment of our peoples, and the political commitment of our governments, to ensure that future generations can understand the causes of the Holocaust and reflect upon its consequences.

d. We pledge to strengthen our efforts to promote education, remembrance and research about the Holocaust, both in countries that have already undertaken such initiatives and in those that choose to join this effort.

We unequivocally assert that a moral imperative compels all health professions to supplement the Stockholm Declaration as follows:

1. Professionals from science, medicine and other healthcare and social science fields played decisive roles in justifying, developing and carrying out some of the most appalling atrocities of the Third Reich, including the compulsory sterilization and medicalized murder of Germans, Austrians and other lives deemed unworthy of living; unethical, brutal experimentation on hospital patients and prisoners; and the unprecedented persecution, including mass murder and the Holocaust – the unique, partially-medicalized genocide of Jews and many others.

Health professionals were prominent among the Nazi perpetrators and their collaborators with these heinous crimes, which were ostensibly designed to improve the health of the German population. Most of them remained unrepentant long after the Nuremberg trials. Acknowledging these medical atrocities is a continuing responsibility for all health professionals, their societies, and institutions.

2. We acknowledge that the destructive potential of science focused solely on knowledge acquisition and population health without care for individual human
beings peaked during the Third Reich with its extreme dehumanizing political conditions and profound moral failures of its health care and scientific establishments. These failures pose a major challenge to contemporary medicine, and they compel us to ensure that the lessons of the Holocaust are integrated into the identities of present and future physicians and other health professionals.

3. **We share a commitment to encourage the study** of the roles of health professionals in medical atrocities committed during the Nazi period, leading up to and including the Holocaust, and the many implications that this legacy holds for us for today. This study should also include the achievements in maintaining high professional and human standards by some physicians and other persons entrusted with health care during the Holocaust.

4. **We share the general obligation of humanity to remember** all the victims of medical atrocities during the Nazi period including the Holocaust and to honor all those who stood against it. We also share a special obligation to prevent the abuse of power in our healing professions. We therefore believe in recognizing the unique and critical roles played by health professionals, remembering those who were their victims, and honoring those who held true to their healers’ oaths in extreme circumstances.

5. **We share a commitment to shed light on the still obscured shadows** of physicians and other health professionals, societies and institutions that perpetrated medical atrocities during the Nazi period. We will take all necessary steps to facilitate the opening of archives to ensure that all documents relevant to the role of medicine in the Holocaust are available to researchers.

We call on institutions of higher learning in all healthcare professions and allied fields to incorporate into their curricula courses and programs on medicine and the Holocaust and its implications for contemporary practice, research and healthcare policy, and to support each other in implementing this Declaration.

*emulating the Stockholm declaration*