Resolution commemorating the 60th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz death camps, expressing solidarity with similar commemorative ceremonies at the United Nations and across the world, reaffirming the commitment to the securing of human rights and dignity, acknowledging the human suffering of victims and survivors of the Holocaust, and imploring all nations to employ all preventive and diplomatic efforts to prevent current and future wars of genocide.

WHEREAS, On January 24, 2005, the United Nations General Assembly commemorated the 60th anniversary of the liberation of prisoners and survivors of Nazi Germany and especially the liberation of Auschwitz and Birkenau; and

WHEREAS, The death camps were constructed by the Nazi regime to exterminate the Jewish population in Europe; and

WHEREAS, The most notorious of the death camps were built in Auschwitz and Birkenau in Poland in which over 1.5 million people, mostly Jews from all parts of Europe, were tortured, gased, murdered or died of starvation; and

WHEREAS, On January 27, 1945, the Soviet Red Army liberated Auschwitz and were horrified to discover over 7,000 prisoners still surviving behind barbed wire fences, severely emaciated and near death; and

WHEREAS, Over six million people Jews died under the dictatorial Nazi regime as well as several million Soviet prisoners of war, communists, homosexuals, Roma Gypsies and political opponents of the Nazi government; and

WHEREAS, Secretary General Kofi Annan, in his speech to the United Nations General Assembly, recognized the contribution of Jews to world culture and history and the enormous suffering of Jewish people and said "The United Nations must never forget that it was created as a response to the evil of Nazism, or that the horror of the Holocaust helped shaped it mission"; and
WHEREAS, On January 25, 2005, German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder presided over similar commemorative ceremonies before the German parliament and said "The memory of the Nazi genocide is part of our national identity...remembering the era of National Socialism and its crimes is a moral obligation we owe not only to the victims, the survivors and relatives, but to ourselves"; and

WHEREAS, In Paris, French President Jaques Chirac unveiled a memorial wall to commemorate the 76,000 Jews that French government sent off to Nazi death camps and acknowledged and apologized for France's complicity in the persecution of Jews in France and vowed fight the recent surge of anti-Semitism in France; and

WHEREAS, Nobel Peace laureate, Elie Wiesel, speaking before the United Nations General Assembly said, "The Jewish Witness that I am speaks of my people's suffering as a warning. He sounds the alarm to prevent those tragedies from being done to others and I am convinced if the world has listened to those of us who tried to speak we may have prevented Darfur, Cambodia, Bosnia and Rwanda; so therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors commemorates the 60th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz death camps, expresses solidarity with similar commemorative ceremonies at the United Nations and across the world, reaffirms the commitment to the securing of human rights and dignity, acknowledges the human suffering of victims and survivors of the Holocaust, and implores all nations to employ all preventive and diplomatic efforts to prevent current and future wars of genocide.
Resolution commemorating the 60th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz death camps, expressing solidarity with similar commemorative ceremonies at the United Nations and across the world, reaffirming the commitment to the securing of human rights and dignity, acknowledging the human suffering of victims and survivors of the Holocaust, and implored all nations to employ all preventive and diplomatic efforts to prevent current and future wars of genocide.

February 1, 2005  Board of Supervisors — ADOPTED

Ayes: 10 - Alioto-Pier, Ammiano, Daly, Elsbernd, Ma, Maxwell, McGoldrick, Mirkarimi, Peskin, Sandoval
Excused: 1 - Duffy
I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED on February 1, 2005 by the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco.

Gloria L. Young
Clerk of the Board

FEB 11 2005

Date Approved

Mayor Gavin Newsom