

# Chair of Holocaust and Genocide Studies



Cherie Blair, Billy Gundelfinger, chairman of the UNISA board of trustees, Issie Kirsh, chairman of the Primedia Foundation, and Tony Blair, the then British Prime Minister, at the inauguration of the UNISA/Primedia Chair of Holocaust and Genocide Studies.

The international community has a responsibility to protect the victims of attempted genocide, said the then British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, in his keynote address at the inauguration of a new academic chair for the study of genocide at UNISA's School of Business Learning in Midrand, in June 2007.

In a bid to encourage education about, and prevention of, genocide in the future, the Primedia Foundation has funded a R5m grant over five years to establish the UNISA/Primedia Chair of Holocaust and Genocide Studies, which aims to bridge the awareness gap between the in-depth international studies of the Holocaust, and the lesser-publicised atrocities resulting from the genocides in Africa. Professor Abebe Zegeye heads up the department, supported by Dr Anthony Court as senior research fellow.

Together with Primedia Education, the chair is in the process of enhancing the SA schools' Grade 9 (Std 7) history curriculum, which includes the study of Apartheid, Human Rights, the Holocaust and other genocides that were motivated by ethnic, racial and religious discrimination.

In addition, a South African delegation of strategic members of the Chair visited the Shoah Foundation at the University of Southern California in June this year, in order to negotiate the university's collection of visual history testimonies that have been collected from victims and families of those who survived the Holocaust, with a view to establishing such a repository at UNISA.

The chair intends broadening its scope of genocide studies, with an emphasis on Africa.

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Issie Kirsh, chairman of the Primedia Foundation, and a driving force behind the UNISA/Primedia Chair of Holocaust and Genocide Studies.