

Good evening,

I'm glad to send you this message on the occasion of the conference "The Righteous of our time against fanaticism, for the dialogue and hospitality" promoted by S&D group and Gariwo Onlus. I'd like to thank the Vice President of the European Parliament and the President of S&D group, Gianni Pittella and the President of Gariwo, Gabriele Nissim, for this chance of debate and reflection in the European Parliament of Bruxelles.

As you may know, the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation will soon host a Garden of the Righteous within the Italian Embassy in Tunis. We chose Tunisia because it is a symbolic and crucial country in the heart of the Mediterranean Sea. Tunisia will be the first of Arab countries to have this special Garden.

It is indeed right and proper to nurture the "memory of the good" and to remember those who, putting to risk their own safety and life, rescued the persecuted of our recent past. Equally, the model of the Righteous charges us with great responsibility and calls us to perform Good in our days.

Today hundreds of thousands people escape from war and poverty towards Europe. But what they see as a land of hope, of shelter and chance for a better life, too often appears as land of barbed wires and political manipulations. The most important migration flow from the Second World War brings us face to face with one of the greatest challenges of contemporary Europe, a determining challenge not only for the survival of who is seeking help but even for the destiny of the European Union itself and for the future of what used to be our best social democratic culture.

As politicians not only we do have the obligation to address the migration phenomenon but also to strongly support who, from the Middle East to our cities, everyday fights for a peaceful coexistence among citizens of different confessions and cultures. The Righteous, from the past as from today, push us and inspire us to pursue this objective.

Paolo Gentiloni  
Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation