

Communiqué Regarding Restitution for Israel and the Jews (September 10, 1952)

Abstract

The first West German compensation regulations at the state and, after 1949, federal levels made the receipt of benefits contingent upon residency in West Germany. Initially, this meant that a large portion of Jewish emigrants and refugees were ineligible for restitution. In September 1951, Chancellor Adenauer declared his willingness to negotiate with the state of Israel about German compensation payments. After difficult negotiations, and despite massive opposition within the cabinet, in the coalition's parliamentary faction, and among the West German public, the Luxemburg Agreement between Israel and the Federal Republic of Germany was signed on September 10, 1952. It stipulated a payment of three billion DM, to be given over a period of time, as compensation for the costs of integrating Jewish refugees into Israeli life. In addition, a payment of 450 million DM to the Conference on Jewish Material Claims against Germany was agreed upon; this organization had been established in 1951 and represented the claims of Jews living outside of Israel in Western countries.

Source

Today, September 10, 1952, at 8 a.m., an agreement was signed in Luxembourg between the Federal Republic of Germany and the state of Israel, by which the Federal Republic, with the intent of making reparations, within the limits of its capacity, for the material harm caused by the National Socialist persecutory measures against the Jewish people, guarantees the state of Israel, on the basis of its demands, repayment of the integration costs that Israel has accrued in the process of taking in Jewish refugees from Germany and the territories formerly under German rule. The agreement was signed by Chancellor Dr. Adenauer and Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Sharett.

In addition, two protocols were signed by Chancellor Dr. Adenauer and Dr. Nahum Goldmann, a member of the executive committee of the Conference on Jewish Material Claims against Germany. The first of these protocols spells out principles for improving the existing restitution legislation in the Federal Republic of Germany; the federal government will initiate its implementation. In the second protocol, the government of the Federal Republic of Germany promises a global payment to the Conference of Jewish Material Claims against Germany. This global payment will be used by the Jewish organizations brought together in the Claims Conference to support, integrate, and settle Jewish victims of National Socialist persecution in various countries.

With the signing of the treaty and the two protocols, the negotiations that have been conducted in the Hague since March 21, 1952, between representatives of the Federal Republic of Germany, representatives of the state of Israel, and delegates of the Jewish world organizations brought together in the Claims Conference, have reached a successful conclusion.

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