

INTERNATIONAL
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Elie Wiesel urges fight against intolerance in rare public appearance

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CHARLOTTE, North Carolina: Elie Wiesel, a Nobel Peace Prize winner and Holocaust survivor, encouraged about 2,000 people not to be "dehumanized by the curse whose name is indifference" during a rare appearance in North Carolina.

When a high school student asked if Israeli "oppression" of the Palestinians was akin to the Nazis' treatment of the Jews, Wiesel, 78, said the comparison should not be made. Wiesel has been a strong supporter of Israel.

"The oppression of Jews was a decision to destroy women and children. Does anybody really believe that this is what Israel wants (to do to Palestinians)?" he said.

Wiesel, who survived the Nazi death camps at Auschwitz and Buchenwald during World War II, also suggested that local religious leaders from different faiths meet each month.

He told listeners to help stop human suffering and genocide, noting the violence in the Darfur region of Sudan and former violence in Bosnia.

"I went to Bosnia and at each house I visited, the person speaking could not continue because of the tears," Wiesel said. "I think my role in life is to go around the world and collect their tears and bring (their cause) to the world."

On the Net:

The Elie Wiesel Foundation for Humanity: <http://www.eliewieselfoundation.org>