

RIGHTEOUS AMONG THE NATIONS

Madam Premier, Your Excellency Ambassador Rotem, Distinguished Guests,

In a world in which the enormity of impending calamity – from climate change to terrorism – seems impervious to the influence of individuals – my mother's heroism is a stark reminder of the infinite power of the individual to make a difference in the face of impossible odds.

Irena, hand in hand with her courageous and willing accomplice, Marian Golebiowski defied the ruthless Nazi juggernaut with her only weapon – love.

I struggled to find the perfect words to honour our mother before I realised that only one person has ever had those words.

In his book, *Unfinished Symphony*, my father wrote:

“Without her, I would have been destroyed, crushed, forgotten – another abstract, anonymous addition to the list of millions of victims of the Holocaust. She gave me life. My infallible, uncompromising, determined war leader – Irena, my wife, my companion, my saviour.”

In 1989 standing on Israeli soil for the first time, my father regretted my mother's absence from the ceremony which honoured Marian Golebiowski at Yad Vashem.

Tonight, my brother Chris and I are deeply grateful to the State of Israel for allowing us, in our father's name to accept this honour on our mother's behalf – and we do so with great pride and love.

This moment in one way sounds the final, great, resonant note of the last movement of what my father called his unfinished symphony.