

# NUREMBURG TRIALS

## About

The Nuremberg Trials were military tribunals following World War II, held by the Allied Forces to prosecute the Nazi officials most responsible for the Holocaust and other war-time atrocities. The initial trials took place between November 20, 1945 and October 1, 1946 in Nuremberg, Germany. The court tried political, military, and economic leaders of Nazi Germany. Judges and chief prosecutors represented four countries, all victors of the war: the Soviet Union, Great Britain, the United States, and France.

Indictments were brought against 24 major war criminals and seven criminal organizations. These indictments included charges for participation in a conspiracy for crimes against peace, planning and waging wars of aggression, war crimes, and crimes against humanity. Of the 24 accused, 12 received the death penalty (two of whom committed suicide), four served 10-20 years in prison, three received lifetime imprisonment, and three were acquitted.

The trials ultimately yielded the Nuremberg Principles which defined war crimes. The trials set precedent for the Genocide Convention, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Abolition of the Statute of Limitations on War Crimes and Crimes Against Humanity, and the Geneva Convention.

These trials set precedent for the later UN tribunals and the International Criminal Court to prosecute perpetrators of genocides and crimes against humanity.



## Statistics

- 24 accused
- 19 convicted
- 3 acquitted

## Ben Ferencz, past and present



Ben Ferencz, at age 27, prosecuted the worst perpetrators of the Nazi Einsatzgruppen, the mobile killing squads responsible for the deaths of 1.5 million Jews. He received convictions for every one of the accused. This was the first trial of his life.

He went on to a lifetime of advocacy for measures that would enhance security for innocent people around the world, bring restitution to those whose lives were grievously affected by evil, and end impunity for perpetrators. He was a lifelong supporter of efforts to create the International Criminal Court, finally formed by the Rome Statute of 1998 and operating since 2002 to enhance justice around the world. At the close of the ICC's first case in 2012, Ferencz gave the

final remarks for the prosecution, harkening back to his words in 1946 that convicted the worst of the Nazis and realizing his dream of a permanent international tribunal.

As Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. once said, "The moral arc of the universe is long, but it bends towards justice." Ben Ferencz has helped to bend that arc.