

## **Closing Speech at the International Commemoration and Liberation Ceremony 2023 by Willi Mernyi, Chairman of Mauthausen Committee Austria**

I would like to thank the members and supporters, the Austrian Association of Mauthausen Survivors, the Comité International de Mauthausen and the Mauthausen Committee Austria.

This liberation ceremony, but also the many commemoration and liberation ceremonies which have taken place all over the country and are still taking place, are all based on the pro bono efforts of local initiatives of the Mauthausen Committee. Thank you so much for your work.

Our events received financial support from the federal institute Mauthausen Concentration Camp Memorial and from all Austrian federal provinces. Our events would not be possible without the countless private donors who have been supporting the International Liberation Ceremony every year.

I would like to thank the company Kelp for tech support on site, Remotion Medienproduktion for the international streaming, and a huge thank you to ORF III for their live broadcast of the International Liberation Ceremony.

Just like this entire event wouldn't have possible financially without the donors and sponsors, it would also have been impossible to implement without the numerous voluntary staff.

Representing the entire team, I would like to thank Christa Bauer, Verena Mayerhofer, Mario Roitmair, Michael Domkar and Herbert Scholz.

And allow me to personally thank one person: Helmut Edelmayr – he has been working for the Liberation Ceremony for 40 years. Thank you so much!

To conclude, I would like to invite you to join us here in Mauthausen, on 5 May 2024 for our liberation ceremony next year. In 2024, the theme of the commemoration and liberation ceremonies will be "Law and Justice".

The virtual commemoration with the thematic focus on "Civil Courage" will be available until the end of the year. Join us! Be part of it! More information on <https://www.befreiungsfeier.at>.

Get home safely and let us dedicate our last applause to our amazing hosts, the two artists Mercedes Echerer and Konstanze Breitebner.