

# PRESS RELEASE

---

Thessaloniki, Greece / Berlin, Germany / Los Angeles, USA – October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2011

## **Aristotle University of Thessaloniki Partners with Freie Universität Berlin**

***Cooperation Enables Aristotle University of Thessaloniki to Access  
the USC Shoah Foundation Institute's Visual History Archive,  
One of the Largest of its Kind in the World***

From today on, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTH), Greece will provide access to the Visual History Archive, an archive of nearly 52,000 video testimonies of Holocaust survivors and other witnesses.

The Shoah Foundation Institute at the University of Southern California (the Institute) built and maintains the archive, and provides access to it to universities and institutions around the world. One such university is the Freie Universität Berlin; it is through a cooperation between the Center for Digital Systems (CeDiS) at Freie Universität Berlin and AUTH, and funding from the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) that the university in Greece will receive access.

“We are convinced that access to this unique archive will promote research and teaching on the history of Thessaloniki and the Holocaust,” said Yannis Mylopoulos, Rector of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. “Aristotle University of Thessaloniki is proud to support efforts directed toward honoring and commemorating the victims of the Holocaust, especially the Jewish Community of Thessaloniki and its victims during the World War II.”

In 2006, Freie Universität Berlin became the first European institution to provide access to the Visual History Archive. “From the beginning, we have endeavored to support the incorporation of the interviews into academic teaching and research to lead to a consistent use of the Archive’s testimonies in various disciplines such as History, Political Science, Sociology, Jewish Studies and Philology. Now, we are very delighted to share our experiences with the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki,” said Prof. Dr. Nicolas Apostolopoulos, Director of the Center for Digital Systems (CeDiS) at Freie Universität Berlin.

“Survivors and other witnesses of the Holocaust have a message for all humanity,” Stephen D. Smith, Executive Director of the USC Shoah Foundation Institute, said. “By becoming a destination for public access to the Institute's Visual History Archive, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki has returned to Greece part of its heritage: not only the hundreds of testimonies that preserve local memory and history, but also the tens of thousands of other testimonies whose lessons are intended to unite us all. The Institute is honored to welcome the community of Salonika and Aristotle University of Thessaloniki into the growing family of locations where survivors will be seen and heard for generations to come. We also wish to acknowledge Freie Universität Berlin for all that it has done to establish this new point of access to the Visual History Archive.”

The USC Shoah Foundation Institute's Visual History Archive contains a collection of nearly 52,000 video testimonies collected in 32 languages and 56 countries. The USC Shoah Foundation Institute interviewed Jewish survivors, homosexual survivors, Jehovah's Witness survivors, liberators and liberation witnesses, political prisoners, rescuers and aid providers, Roma and Sinti survivors, survivors of Eugenics policies, and war crimes trials participants.

More than 300 of the testimonies accessible in the archive were conducted in Greece and in the Greek language. Just over 600 of the interviewees in the entire archive were born in Greece, 381 of them in Salonika. Today, the Visual History Archive is currently available at 32 universities and institutions around the world, visit (<http://dornsife.usc.edu/vhi/testimoniesaroundtheworld/> for a full list).

## **Further Information:**

### **Aristotle University of Thessaloniki**

Press Office, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, 541 24, Greece  
Tel.: +30 2310-99-6778, Fax: +30 2310-99-6730, E-Mail: [louizou@ad.auth.gr](mailto:louizou@ad.auth.gr)  
Website: [www.auth.gr/home/index\\_en.html](http://www.auth.gr/home/index_en.html)

### **Freie Universität Berlin**

Katrin Plank-Sabha, Center for Digital Systems (CeDiS), Freie Universität Berlin,  
Hnestraße 24, 14195 Berlin, Germany  
Tel.: +49 30-838-53705, Fax: +49 30-838-52843, E-Mail: [kplank@cedis.fu-berlin.de](mailto:kplank@cedis.fu-berlin.de)  
Website: [www.vha.fu-berlin.de/en/](http://www.vha.fu-berlin.de/en/)

### **USC Shoah Foundation Institute**

Talia Cohen, USC Shoah Foundation Institute, Leavey Library, 650 West 35th Street, Suite 114,  
Los Angeles, CA 90089-2571, USA  
Tel.: +1 213-740-6036, E-Mail: [taliacoh@usc.edu](mailto:taliacoh@usc.edu)  
Website: [dornsife.usc.edu/vhi](http://dornsife.usc.edu/vhi)