



Riegner, Gerhart M.

Gerhart Riegner was Honorary Vice President of the World Jewish Congress. Born in Germany in 1911, he went into exile in 1933, and studied international law in France and Switzerland. He joined the World Jewish Congress when it was organized in 1936 and was its representative in Geneva, Switzerland, during World War II. Subsequently he became Secretary General of the organization. He was the first to inform the Allied governments of the Nazi program to annihilate the Jews, cabling Rabbi Stephen S. Wise in New York and Sidney Silverman, MP, in London to that effect in August 1942. In the post-war years he worked to establish ongoing relationships both with the Vatican and with the World Council of Churches, and was instrumental in founding the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations (IJCIC). In recent years he has taken an active role in studies and debates concerning the record of the Christian churches and church leaders during the Holocaust.