

Translation of the letter from the President of the Institute of National Remembrance, Dr. Jarosław Szarek, February 5 to Mr. Professor Yehuda Bauer, Honorary Member of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance

In connection with your statement, I would like to inform you that the Institute of National Remembrance is not a party to the legislative process regarding the Act on the Institute of National Remembrance and it is therefore not the appropriate entity to address any concerns on the subject.

I would, however, like to raise the issue of historical research and strongly emphasize that scientific research in Poland has been, is and will be free of restrictions, and no regulations, whether currently binding, or being formulated shall change this.

Referring to the statement regarding the history of the Jewish community in Markowa, I would like to inform you that the Institute of National Remembrance was the first to undertake research into the murder of Jews as part of the German Reinhardt Operation in this town, as well as the participation of the local Polish population in searching for Jews. The research resulted in the publication of an extensive article by Dr Mateusz Szpytma, a former employee of the IPN Branch Office in Krakow, currently the Deputy President of the Institute of National Remembrance, entitled “Crimes against the Jewish population in Markowa in 1942 in the context of the criminal proceedings of 1949-1954”.

It is further worth pointing out that although there have been other publications regarding the Reinhardt Operation in Markowa, unfortunately previously published IPN findings in this matter have not been included in them/ taken into consideration by the authors. I have enclosed the article in Polish and a draft translation into English. Furthermore, please let me emphasise that the matter which you have mentioned is incorporated into the permanent display of the Ulma Family Museum of Poles Saving Jews during World War II in Markowa.

It has frequently occurred that those who had voiced certain concerns about the Museum have modified their opinions after having seen the permanent exhibition for themselves. Out of respect for you and your achievements, as well as the organization, which you honorably preside over, it is of great significance for me that you have the chance to formulate an opinion after having personally seen the Museum. Therefore, I would like to invite you to visit the Museum. The Institute would be happy to provide transport from Israel and cover the costs of your stay in Poland as well as to organise a trip to the aforementioned Museum in Markowa.

Thank you very much for your reply to the proposal of the authorities of the Institute of National Remembrance during the IHRA meeting in Bern, Switzerland on 28 November 2017, renewed in a letter dated 19 December 2017 concerning a meeting with you at a location of your convenience in Poland or in Israel. I would sincerely like to uphold this declaration, hoping for our further cooperation.

