

Institute of National Remembrance

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76th anniversary of the revolt in Treblinka II - 2 August 2019

Representatives of state authorities, local government and the church took part in the 76th anniversary of the revolt in Treblinka II extermination and death camp. The commemorative events were organised by the Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute. Delegations of the Institute of National Remembrance, Jewish circles, diplomats and the widow of Samuel Willenberg, the last surviving Treblinka prisoner, Ada Krystyna Willenberg were among those to attend the commemoration.

















The ceremony was opened by Prof. Paweł Śpiwak, Head of the Jewish Historical Institute. After the opening speech, the letters from the President of Poland, Andrzej Duda, Deputy Prime Minister, and Minister of Culture and National Heritage, Piotr Gliński and Prime Minister of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu were read out to the gathered guests.

In her speech, Ada Krystyna Willenberg said that "It was great heroism to start uprising in the ghetto but even more so in the camp. ... People did not know each other in Treblinka. ... In Treblinka there were no arms. In Treblinka nobody knew anyone. My husband told me that he himself had not known about anyone planning the revolt till the very last moment " .

The guests also saw the exhibition "Czy nie wiedzą, że jadą na śmierć?" [Don't they know that they are going to die?] It gathers contemporary pictures of the American photographer, Alan Metnick, who visited the Treblinka Museum. The photos are accompanied by quotes from Emanuel Ringelblum's writings to show the Warsaw ghetto's atmosphere when the Nazis started deportations to the extermination camp of Treblinka in summer 1942.

On 2 August 1943, a revolt began in the German extermination camp. It was prepared by a group of more than 800 prisoners. They attacked the guards and set a container with fuel on fire. The main goal was

to escape from the camp. About 200 prisoners managed to flee. It is estimated that no more than 100 prisoners could survive the war

The Treblinka death camp was built by Nazi Germans in occupied Poland as part of Operation Reinhard, in which all Jews from the territory of General Government were to be exterminated.

Treblinka, along with Bełżec and Sobibór, was an extermination camp for Jews with the aim to exterminate as many people as possible within the shortest possible time. The first incoming victims from the Warsaw ghetto arrived in Treblinka on 23 July 1942. By August 1943, Nazis murdered about 900,000 people. The majority of them came from Poland (Warsaw, Białystok, Grodno, Kielce, Radom, Łuków, Częstochowa, Kozienice and many other minor towns). Treblinka was also the final destination for Jews from Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, France, Greece, Yugoslavia, Germany and the Soviet Union. Treblinka also received two or three transports of Romani people.

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