

Institute of National Remembrance

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40th Conference of Polish Museums, Archives and Libraries in the West – Paris, 28 August - 1 September 2018

On 28 August 2018 at the headquarters of the Polish Historical and Literary Society and the Polish Library in Paris, the 40th Conference of Polish Museums, Archives and Libraries in the West began. The theme this year is the 100th anniversary of Poland regaining its independence.











Participants of the conference will listen to 9 lectures under the theme "On the way to independence. Traces of work in the archives, documents and state, local and Polish community abroad journalism in the countries where Poles have lived". The program also includes lectures such as: "Legions and their History in the Collections of the Jozef Pilsudski Institute of America", "John Paul II and Independence", "Kościuszko and Paderewski. Signposts towards Independence", "Reactions in the Hungarian Press to Polish Rebirth" and "Commitment of Poles in Austria to Poland during World War I".

During the conference protocol from the 39th Conference of Polish Museums, Archives and Libraries in New York will be adopted and plans for the next year will be discussed.

The conference which will last until 1 September will be attended by the delegation of the Institute of National Remembrance headed by Dr Jarosław Szarek, President of the IPN. The following representatives of the Institute will also take part in the meeting: Marzena Kruk, Director of the IPN Archive, Mariusz Kwaśniak, Deputy Director of the IPN Archive and Grzegorz Trzyna, Head of the Department of the Archive Management Resources.

On Wednesday, 29 August, during an open session, Dr Jarosław Szarek together with Jarosław Sellin, Deputy Minister of Culture and National Heritage will deliver speeches. President of the IPN will address the forthcoming celebrations connected with the 100th anniversary of Polish independence. During the session, Prof Kazimierz Piotr Zaleski, President of the Polish Historical and Literary Society and the Polish Library in Paris and the organizer of the meeting, will discuss the work of his institution.

The Conference launched in 1979 is a loose association of Polish organizations, initially of Western Europe, and later also from the USA, Canada and South America. These are mainly institutions that have libraries, archives or museums of the Polish community abroad. These centers have been contributing to the collecting, storing and sharing of Polish culture abroad for many years. They collect works in the field of history, literature and art, assemble emigrant publications, issue bibliographic studies, exchange publications with academic and university libraries in Poland. They gather academic sources and

conduct historical research related to the newest history of Poland, collect souvenirs (decorations, portraits, medals, banners) donated by private individuals, take care of monuments and publish their own publications. The Permanent Conference is an important forum for exchanging experiences of the representatives of emigration institutions from around the world.

The conference brings together the most important cultural institutions of the Polish community abroad, including the Polish Library in Paris, the Polish Museum in Rapperswil, and similar establishments in London, Rome, Montreal and Buenos Aires. In the USA, it gathers associations such as the Polish Army Veterans' Association in America (SWAP), the Jozef Pilsudski Institute of America, the Kościuszko Foundation, the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences of America, Archives, Library and Polish Museums in Orchard Lake and the Polish Museum in America based in Chicago. The aim of the conference is to strengthen cooperation between member institutions, exchange experiences, assist in collecting *Polonica*, conducting a joint information campaign and sharing the work of member institutions.

For many years, the annual meetings of representatives of museums, libraries and archives in the West have documented the cultural work of the emigration institutions. The goal of these meetings is also to share problems and together search for solutions, as well as initiate projects connected with maintaining Polish national heritage abroad.

The first session, which was held in Poland was the 17th session, organized in Lublin in September 1995 by the Polish Library in London

together with the Library of the Catholic University of Lublin. In Poland, four sessions have been held so far (in 1996 in Wrocław, in 2004 in Krakow, in 2010 in Warsaw and again in Wrocław in September 2012).

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