

Institute of National Remembrance

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The unveiling of the plaque commemorating Janusz Kurtyka in the new seat of the Institute of National Remembrance, 13 August 2020

The ceremonial unveiling of the plaque dedicated to Janusz Kurtyka, Ph. D. an anti-communist opposition activist, historian and President of the Institute of National Remembrance in the years 2005–2010 will be held on 13 August (Thursday) 2020, at 12.00, in the new headquarters of the Institute of National Remembrance at 18 Postępu Street in Warsaw. The plaque will be unveiled by the IPN's President Jarosław Szarek, Ph.D.

The first plaque commemorating the late Janusz Kurtyka and his tragic death in the presidential plane crash near Smolensk, was unveiled on 8 October 2010 on the facade of the then headquarters of the Institute of National Remembrance at 28 Towarowa Street in Warsaw during the celebration of the 10th anniversary of the Institute.

In connection with the transfer of the headquarters of the Institute of National Remembrance to a new building, we would like to pay tribute to the figure whose achievements remain a reference point in the activities of the Institute of National Remembrance. The new plaque will be unveiled on the 60th anniversary of Janusz Kurtyka's birth.

Janusz Kurtyka was born on 13 August 1960 in Cracow. He was a graduate of the History-and-Philosophy Faculty of the Jagiellonian University. He completed doctoral studies at the History Institute of the Polish Academy of Sciences, where in 1995 he defended his doctoral thesis in the humanities. In 2000 he received his doctoral habilitation.

In the years 2000–2005 he was the organiser and director of the Cracow branch of the Institute of National Remembrance (IPN). Since 1979 he had been active in the democratic opposition in Cracow, co-founding the Independent Students Association (NZS) at the Jagiellonian University's History Institute and being a member of the NZS JU founding committee. He was a scholar employed at the History Institute of the Polish Academy of Sciences (from 1985) and a member of its Scholarly Council in the years 1999–2002 and 2003–2006. Between 1989 and 2000 he was the Chairman of the “Solidarity” Trade Union of the Cracovian History Institute of the Polish Academy of Sciences.

Janusz Kurtyka was the author of more than 140 publications in the field of the Polish mediaeval and early-modern history as well as the history of the anti-communist resistance movement in Poland after 1944. He was also the co-author of numerous other publications.

Since 1994 he had been the chief editor of the ‘Freedom and Independence Historical Notebooks’, the co-author of the ‘The Historical and Geographical Dictionary of the Cracow Province in the Middle Ages’ and ‘The Polish Biographical Dictionary’. He chaired the Editorial Committee of the series ‘Conspiracy and Social Resistance in

Poland: 1944-1956. A Biographical Dictionary'. He was a member of the editorial board of the Institute of National Remembrance's scholarly journal 'The Apparatus of Repression in the Polish People's Republic: 1944-1989'. Janusz Kurtyka was also a member of such organisations as the Polish Historical Society, the Society of Friends of Science in Przemyśl and the Polish Heraldic Society.

On 9 December 2005 the Sejm of the Republic of Poland elected Professor Janusz Kurtyka as the President of the Institute of National Remembrance.

Prof. Janusz Kurtyka was a laureate of the Adam Heymowski Prize (1996), the second prize in the Klemens Szaniawski Competition (1998), the Joachim Lelewel Prize (2000) and the Jerzy Łojek Prize (2001). In 2009 President Lech Kaczyński awarded him with the Commander's Cross with Star of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland. In 2010 Janusz Kurtyka was posthumously awarded with the IPN's Custodian of National Memory Prize.

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