## Institute of National Remembrance

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The opening of the "Guarding the Memory. 30 years of the Kielce Katyn Families Association" exhibition – Kielce, 15 September 2021















It is thanks to you – associations, foundations, and the involvement of the Polish state that the Katyn lie is no longer a lie – stated Karol Nawrocki, Ph.D., the President of the Institute of National Remembrance.

Karol Nawrocki, Ph.D. also remarked that "the USSR was responsible for the deaths of nearly 7 million people before 1939. Those starved to death in Ukraine and Kazakhstan, and those murdered as a result of the anti-Polish NKVD operation in the years 1937–1938".

- On 17 September 1939, the Red Army stabbed the Second Polish Republic, engaged in the fight against Germany, in the back. This was, in fact, the 4th partition of Poland, but also the path to what we call the Katyn Massacre. Polish officers and intellectuals were killed and their families deported to the East, said the President of the Institute of National Remembrance.

Ongoing cooperation with the Katyn Families
Association brings the truth to light, but also restores
splendor to Polish victims of World War II, including
victims of the Katyn Massacre. This is what this
exhibition is about and I would like to thank you for that
– emphasized the IPN's President.

The official opening of the exhibition was attended, among others, by the Deputy President of the Institute of National Remembrance, Karol Polejowski, Ph.D., D.Sc., the Director of the IPN Branch in Cracow, Filip Musiał, Ph.D.D.Sc., the Head of the IPN's Kielce Branch Dorota Koczwańska-Kalita, Ph.D. and representatives of the Kielce Katyn

Families Association. The exhibition can be viewed at the Institute's "History Point" Educational Center in Kielce.

The Association's 30-year long activity has certainly attained recognition in Kielce and the entire region as it has greatly contributed to a radical change in the perception of the Katyn Massacre disseminating knowledge about the crime, its victims and perpetrators.

Among the numerous and valuable initiatives undertaken by the members of the Association, many have gone down in the history of the city and have made their mark within the public city space.

One of the initial projects was the erection of the monument "Pomordowanym na nieludzkiej ziemi". [Murdered on the inhuman land" in 1990 at the cemetery in Kielce. Thanks to the efforts of the Home Army veterans, supported by the Katyn Families, a monument symbolizing the Katyn genocide and commemorating 396 victims of the crime from the Świętokrzyskie region was mounted.

The Katyn Massacre, committed by the Soviets in the spring of 1940, was an unprecedented crime. At least 21,857 Polish citizens - officers, policemen and, above all, representatives of the Polish intelligentsia fell victim to the massacre. It also took a tragic toll among the inhabitants of the Kielce region. As many as 11% of the murdered were associated with the pre-war Kielce Province.

The consequence of the genocide was the Katyn lie, also known as the founding lie of the communist Polish People's Republic. It has had a

tremendous impact on the recent history of Poland. The changes initiated in 1989 gave rise to the struggle for the truth. The relatives of the victims of the crime – most often the wives and children of the murdered – were pioneers in deconstructing history. Among them, there were many inhabitants of the Świętokrzyskie Region.

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