

WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS

ROBERT SINGER
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

His Excellency Saulius Skvernelis
Prime Minister of the Republic of
Lithuania
Gedimino pr. 11
Vilnius LT-01103
Lithuania

April 1, 2019

Dear Prime Minister Skvernelis,

The World Jewish Congress and our affiliate, the Lithuanian Jewish Community, were dismayed by a recent document published by the state-founded Center for the Study of the Genocide and Resistance of Residents of Lithuania on the horrific children's Aktion, which seems to justify or diminish the callous brutality of Nazi collaborators and distort Holocaust facts in an apparent attempt to absolve Lithuanians of responsibility for the murder of millions of their Jewish neighbors.

This is nothing short of Holocaust revisionism, a denial and belittlement of the greatest crime in history, deserving of condemnation at the highest levels of Lithuanian government and society.

The document is brimming with blatant and offensive inaccuracies, and a disjointed explanation of Lithuanian collaboration with the Nazis. It claims on the one hand that Lithuanians operated against the will of Germans, while simultaneously declaring that Nazi Germany was seen as an ally. Furthermore, it goes so far as to say that the number of Lithuanian who shot Jews was lower than in other nations, blindly side-sweeping that the greatest percentage of Jews were murdered in Lithuania, compared to other states in Europe, including Germany.

The World Jewish Congress and Lithuanian Jewish Community are of one mind that any collective condemnation of ethnic Lithuanians or other ethnic group for the perpetration of the Holocaust is wholly unacceptable. We are equally and duly opposed to any attempt to absolve of proven responsibility those Lithuanians who collaborated in murdering Jews, or to deliver an obfuscated narrative of Holocaust era events to a new generation of Lithuanian citizens.

We join our affiliated community in calling on the Lithuanian government, in both its executive and legislative branches, to immediately and unambiguously denounce this publication as an incident of institutional antisemitism, and demand that the Center publicly retract this text, apologize to the Lithuanian Jewish Community and world Jewry for diminishing the scope of the Holocaust, and apologize to the

Lithuanian public for misleading them and insulting the memory of both the victims and the heroes who tried to save them.

We appreciate your understanding in this critical matter. At a time of rising antisemitism across the globe, and growing popularity of neo-Nazi movements – including in Lithuania and among its Baltic neighbors – it is more important than ever that we maintain a clear-minded awareness and memory of the Holocaust, and to educate the younger generation about the horrors of xenophobia, antisemitism, and blind hatred. By diluting and misconstruing the facts to fit a certain narrative, the door remains open for atrocities such as the Holocaust to happen again.

The World Jewish Congress and the Lithuanian Jewish Community stand ready to assist in any way possible to assist in this crucial endeavor.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

CC: Linas Antanas Linkevičius, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Lithuania
Faina Kukliansky, President, Jewish Community of Lithuania