

Institute of National Remembrance

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Statement by the Institute of National Remembrance on the position of the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance

It is with great astonishment that the Institute of National Remembrance has received the statement of the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance stating that our Ukrainian partner does not see the possibility of continuing the work of the Polish-Ukrainian Forum of Historians in its current format.

The Forum has been functioning since 2015 under the auspices of both Institutes of National Remembrance, constituting a platform of Polish-Ukrainian historical dialogue. The result of the five previous meetings of the Forum has been a discussion on and presentation of the findings of outstanding researchers from both countries on many key issues concerning particularly difficult pages of the history of Polish-Ukrainian relations in 1939-1947.

During the last meeting, the participants of the Polish-Ukrainian Forum of Historians decided to publish the results of the Forum's activities in the form of a collective work, in both Polish and Ukrainian, in the near

future. After publishing these materials, the Forum will be able to continue discussions on further significant moments of Polish-Ukrainian history.

We would like to remind you that Polish-Ukrainian dialogue concerning also the difficult aspects of our common past, started long before the UPN was founded. For this reason, we express the conviction that despite the UPN's unfavorable position, Polish-Ukrainian scientific contacts will be continued. Criminal responsibility for the denial of "the crimes of Ukrainian nationalists in the years 1925-1950" described in the amendment to the Act on the Institute of National Remembrance does not apply to scientific activities. The concerns about the safety of Ukrainian participants of scientific debates in Poland are completely unjustified if not provocative.

We would further like to remind you that in 2015, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine adopted a law giving members of the OUN and UPA as well as Ukrainian organisations collaborating with the Germans the status of "fighters for the freedom and independence of Ukraine." The provisions of this act may be used to inhibit any critical reflection on the activities of Ukrainian nationalists, including the presentation of facts about the genocide on the Polish population by the UPA.

Despite the above, the Institute of National Remembrance expresses its hope for the rebuilding of a constructive scientific dialogue with Ukraine and for undertaking joint efforts to protect the resting places and symbolic places of national remembrance.

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