

Polish ambassador to Lithuania states indignation over publication on Holocaust

VILNIUS, Nov 26, BNS — Poland's Ambassador to Lithuania Janusz Skolimowski on Friday joined the group of foreign diplomats in their dissatisfaction over the statements on the Holocaust published in the weekly magazine Veidas.

In an open letter published in the weekly's website, the ambassador said he was "deeply aggrieved" by some of the statements by author Petras Stankeras.

"The statements provided in the article by Stankeras, which question the fact of Jewish annihilation during World War II and the historic meaning of the Nuremberg process, deserve the highest censure," said the ambassador.

"What is particularly painful is that the statements that deny the historical character of the Holocaust are formulated in our part of Europe, which witnessed the tragedy. Responsibility for the spread of truth about the historical legacy, which we communicate to other generations, requires a higher degree of wisdom in discussing the topic in the press," said the ambassador.

Ambassadors of seven European countries on Wednesday sent a letter to Lithuania's interior minister expressing dissatisfaction over the article, where the ministry's official said: "It is also important that the Nuremberg process provided a legal basis to the legend about the six million supposedly murdered Jews, although the court didn't have even a single document signed by A. Hitler on the extermination of Jews (no one has found this document to this day, if it even exists, although a million dollar award has been promised)."

The letter, a copy of which was received by BNS and which was signed by British, Estonian, French, Finnish, Dutch, Norwegian and Swedish ambassadors, suggested that the statement equaled denial of the Holocaust and had to be condemned.

Following the wave of indignation, Stankeras resigned from the official post at the ministry, while the interior minister said he had nothing to do with the subordinate's thoughts.

Gintaras Sarafinas, editor in chief of the weekly magazine Veidas, said that Stankeras never denied the fact of Holocaust, and the misunderstanding — occurred due to misinterpretation of one sentence.

"He was fired over this one single sentence. He is raising the question because there is specific confirmation to this day about the killing of four million Jews, and he wrote about a legend that suggests there were six million (Jews). He is just contemplating. It is also our mistake as editors —the word 'supposedly' is spelled in a wrong place — theoretically, the word 'supposedly' should be in a different place — 'the legend about supposedly six million murdered Jews.' This is a discussion about the figure in his article, not about denial of the Holocaust," said the chief editor.

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