

Translation of:

<http://alkas.lt/2011/03/19/grupe-visuomeniniu-organizaciju-siuos-metus-paskelbe-1941-m-birzelio-sukilimo-metais/>

---

## Group of Public Organizations Announce This the Year of the June 1941 Uprising

March 19, 2011

[www.alkas.lt](http://www.alkas.lt)



Photo: Monument to freedom fighters

A group of non-governmental organizations have released a declaration calling for appropriately marking the 70th anniversary of the June 1941 uprising.

The June 1941 uprising was an uprising prepared by the Lithuanian Activist Front (LAF) against the occupational regime of the Soviet Union. The uprising was begun the first day of the German-Soviet war, on June 22, and lasted a week. The insurgents formed the Provisional Government of Lithuania which on 23 June 1941 announced the declaration of the restoration of the Independent State of Lithuania and a call to the Lithuanian nation on Kaunas radio. The composition of the Provisional Government of Lithuania was also announced. Battles with withdrawing Red Army units and Communist activists through Lithuania. Lithuania was the only Soviet-occupied country where an armed insurrection began with the advent of the German-Soviet war.



Photo: Monument to colonel Kazys Skirpa, leader of the Berlin LAF and organizer of the June, 1941, uprising, at Petrasiuonai cemetery in Kaunas. From kam.lt

## Declaration by Civic Non-Governmental Organizations

This year is the 70th anniversary year of the June 1941 uprising for Lithuania. The sacrifice and bravery of the citizens of that period cannot be forgotten.

We bow our heads to the organizers of the uprising who tried to oppose the world and the terrorizing totalitarianisms, we say thank you to the daughters and sons of the nation who did not cling to life out of love of homeland and for the return of her [the nation's] trampled honor.

The year having begun, however, we have heard next to nothing from official government institutions about what we will actually do in thinking about the anniversary of the Fight for Freedom and Great Losses, one of the most honorable and tragic pages in the modern history of our Nation. Just as we do not see either more significant studies by historians about the course of events of that loss of statehood, about the reasons for internal demoralization of certain social groups from that period. Just as [we do not see studies either] about the people who performed the tasks for organizing and protecting the Nation under the difficult conditions of two occupations and a world war.

We would say even more: the thoughts expressed by some historians and by certain leaders of the Lithuanian History Institute on the people who prepared the soil for the crop of February 16<sup>th</sup> resemble more an invitation to enter into a complete dead end: such a place is where law enforcement institutions in the field of law have ended up.

So we thought what society itself could do during this anniversary year and believing that not only members of our organization can accomplish great works based on the people's initiative, but that all Lithuanian citizens can, by organizing to carry out the important tasks of statehood and by organizing others to do the same, and by adhering to the standards of our state's Constitution outlawing the repression of the sovereignty of the Nation.

We proclaim this year the Year of Studying and Commemorating the Events of the June 1941 Uprising.

In the program dedicated to that period we want to encourage people to join together in joint work so that initiatives will appear in all Lithuanian lands. Including those explaining to us important events in the recent past.

The suggestions for actions we have prepared are intended for a democratic society ordered on the foundations of self-rule. But we also hope to receive support from honest professional historians, cultural figures and state institutions as well. We believe that today it is more important than ever before to analyze the motivations leading to the action by the political elite of that pre-occupational period and later to statehood, in the paralysis of the 1930s. It is important to determine honestly why a rather large part of society collaborated with both foreign powers trying to extinguish Lithuanian statehood, causing much pain to their compatriots or even committing terrible crimes [against them]. We have in our thoughts not just the suffering of Lithuanians, but also the extermination of Lithuanian citizens of Jewish and Roma ethnicity organized by the Nazis, while it still isn't being said how many and which Lithuanians or people of other ethnicities collaborated in that. And why they did. So that the truth about the events of that time wouldn't be distorted. And so that the science of history wouldn't serve political speculations aimed against the state.

## In the name of non-governmental and youth organizations:

Civic non-governmental organizations in marking the 70th anniversary of the June 1941 uprising

The 70th anniversary of the Uprising provides Lithuanians, wherever they live in the world, the opportunity to organize as a united community. Only in this way, through common activity, can we through our work become worthy of those, some of whom at that time sacrificed all that is most dear, often their lives, for the freedom of our Homeland and our future.

But we are only able to reflect the thoughts of part of Lithuanian society in this program. It in no way limits compatriots in all world and national regions to mark the important events on which we will be focused the entire year in their own way under different programs.

We invite state structures, and first of all Her Excellency the President, the Lithuanian Parliament and the Government, to assemble their most serious intellectual forces for correctly examining this complex part of our modern history, to present it to our Nation and the society of the world. And for all ecclesiastical Lithuanian Christian confessions to bless the work of people dedicated to that.

In these suggestions we foresee:

1. Tasks which can be accomplished by the forces of organized society (volunteers) comprised of civic non-governmental and youth organization regional working groups:

Creation of general national commemorative plaques with an Uprising pictogram.

Determination of the most significant sites of the June 1941 uprising sites in the main centers of Kaunas and Vilnius (LAF headquarters, battles with Soviets). Appeal to municipalities to mark these sites with the aforementioned commemorative plaques.

Determining locations of and marking battles with occupational powers in the regions (Varena, Alytus, Zarasai and elsewhere).

Refurbishing gravesites of insurgents and partisans who perished as a continuous operation by society. Planting a memorial park and tree lane in memory of the insurgents in spring and autumn.

2. Organizing conferences (at academic sites and places where battles are commemorated and at schools).

Planning and organization of academic conferences dedicated to the period of the uprising hidden from history should become the task of the Government and the Center for the Study of the Genocide and Resistance of Lithuanian Residents. As members of society we are ready to contribute through collecting information about still-living witnesses, setting testimonies in context, organizing commemorations at schools and through coordinating work with municipal education departments. Besides teachers, ethnographers, regional studies scholars, local priests and members of the

sharpshooters and volunteer organizations [LAF and associated “partisans”] can achieve much in this area.

A virtual webpage [sic] of the events should include:

The conditions precipitating the international situation giving rise to the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact. The role of negative collaborators in preparation for the first Soviet occupation of the Baltic states. Organization of LAF in Soviet-occupied Lithuania. Composition of the uprising and the Provisional Government. The special importance of the uprising for reviving civic self-respect. Issues of presenting statehood under conditions of Nazi occupation: what did the German occupiers want? The fate of the insurgents and members of the Provisional Government. Insurgents and anti-Nazi as well as anti-Soviet resistance organizations after the second Soviet occupation. Plans by Soviet occupiers for civilian residents in case of war. Comparing mass murders committed by occupiers in Lithuania and other Baltic states. The “elucidation” of the 1938-1940 period (hidden from history) after March 11, 1990.

### 3. Creation of methodical educational material.

To seek financing for documentary films about people of that period, including on the members of the June uprising. To collect and publish collections of photographs of Uprising and Provisional Government members.

### 4. Dramatization of June uprising episodes

To suggest to the Kaunas, Klaipeda and other military history clubs to stage events over the course of the year recreating the events of the Uprising in Kaunas, Varena, Vilnius and other places.

### 5. To offer all material collected over the course of the year of the anniversary of the June uprising to the media.

We will attempt to make sure that the words of the address of Insurgent Leader L. Prapuolenis to the residents of the country will reach radio listeners and television viewers multiple times over the course of the year.

6. Reburial of the remains of head of the Provisional Government of Lithuania Juozas Ambrazevicius-Brazaitis.

Relatives having taken care of all permissions for exhuming the remains of this remarkable Lithuanian cultural and social figure and moving them from the USA to Kaunas, we will strive to have the reburial ceremony given the status of state funeral.

Members of non-governmental and especially youth organizations will contribute as much as we can so that information about the life and activities of this person and his colleagues would reach all members of our organizations and all places in the country, and so that the memory of this person would be commemorated in fitting with his acts of merit to the history of the Nation.

**Declaration signatories:**

Director of the board, the Union of Insurgents of the Lithuanian Uprising of June 22-26, 1941, Alfonsas Zaldokas

Director of the board of the Friends of Lithuanian National Defense Club, retired major Antanas Burokas

Director of the board, Union of Defenders of Independence, retired colonel J. Gecas

Director, Union of Relatives of Lithuanian Military Soldiers Who Suffered under the Soviet and Nazi Genocides, Vytautas Zabielskas

Chairman, Union of Lithuanian Reserve Officers, lieutenant colonel Algirdas Jurkevicius

Deputy director, Association of Lithuanian Military Volunteers, retired private Simonas Grigonis

President, Organization of Lithuanian Military Reserve Soldiers, lieutenant colonel Vytautas Cepukas

Union of Reserve Officers, retired colonel Romas Zibas

Director, Lithuanian Sajudis, Rytas Kupčinskas

Association of Lithuanian Freedom Fighters/Forest Brothers,  
Albinas Kentra

Director, Association for the Beautification of Lithuania, Juozas  
Dingelis

Director, Lithuanian Womens League, Ona Voveriene

Director, Union of Lithuanian Freedom Battles [sic, "Fighters"],  
Jonas Ceponis

Director, Center for the Support of Families of Missing People,  
Ona Gustiene

Director of board, Bishop. M. Valancius Sobriety Movement,  
Juozas Saulys

Director, Movement of Friends of the Lithuanian Front, Kestutis  
Milkeraitis

Chairman, Lithuanian Nationalist Center, Ricardas Cekutis

Chairman, Club of Lithuanian Vytautas, Vytautas Paulaitis