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## Honoring of Victims of the Mass Murder of Jews of Kaušenai [sic — Jews of Plungė murdered at nearby Kaušenai Hill]

ELTA

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Safeguarding the memory of Holocaust victims encourages the keeping of traditions and spiritual values, Lithuanian deputy foreign minister Asta Skaisgirytė Liaukšienė said Sunday at a ceremony to unveil a renewed memorial to the Kaušenai tragedy.

"We, the living, and our children and grandchildren need the memory of the Holocaust. It is needed to preserve that which should be holy to every person, regardless of his ethnicity or creed. That is respect and love for one another, for one's homeland, one's history, one's traditions and the spiritual values of humanity," Skaisgirytė Liaukšienė said at the ceremony commemorating the 70th anniversary of the mass murder of the Jews of [at] Kutenai.

The deputy foreign minister said we cannot bring back the dead, but we must always seek a way to remember and honor them.

"It's not possible to bring the victims of the Holocaust back to life, but their memory knocks at the door to the conscience of each of us. And so I believe it is possible to preserve the memory of Holocaust victims, [memory] which is needed for the peace of mind not just of the dead," she said.

A Wall of Memory was specially constructed for the commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the Kaušenai mass murder containing the names of the victims of the events of July, 1941. One thousand eight hundred bricks from the demolished Plungė synagogue were used to build the wall, one brick for each Jew who lost their life here.

The Foreign Ministry press release said surviving relatives of Holocaust victims, a Lithuanian parliamentary delegation and representatives of the Japanese, German, US, Israeli and other embassies attended the ceremony.

A monument was built at Kaušenai in 1952. Lithuanian's only Jewish folk artist Jakovas Bunka and six other Lithuanian woodworkers built another monument in 1986 which draws visitors from around the world annually.

The Wall of Memory was made possible by the Jakovas Bunka Welfare and Support Fund. Glenda and Abel Levitt of Israel have been caring for and restoring the memorial since 2000.

Supporters don't want the site of the tragedy forgotten and decided to renovate the wooden sculptures now over two decades old and to make the memorial more impervious to time.