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HE Ambassador Asta Skaisgirytė Liauškienė
The Lithuanian Embassy,
Lithuania House,
2 Bessborough Gardens,
Westminster,
London SW1V 2JE

14th December 2012

Dear Madame Ambassador,

I am writing in my position as Chairman of the Berlin association of anti-fascists who were persecuted by the Nazis and federation of anti-fascists (Vereinigung der Verfolgten des Naziregimes – Bund der Antifaschisten). My parents were condemned to death and were murdered in the place of execution Berlin Plötzensee for their resistance against the Hitler regime.

I was amazed to hear that the Lithuanian Embassy in London supports the Conference on Jewish-Lithuanian Issues including the Holocaust. I perceive this to be inconsistent with the way these subjects are addressed in Lithuania. I am concerned about press reports I am aware of, and I hear from friends that the Holocaust which claimed more than 200,000 victims in Lithuania is only marginally mentioned and not at all in the Museum of Genocide. While the last survivors of the Holocaust are criminalised and persecuted, former anti-Semites and the murderers of Jewish people are honoured as heroes. The Lithuanian government has so far done little to protect Holocaust memorial monuments and those commemorating the resistance against the German occupation from threats of vandalism.

To my dismay I learned of the tribute paid to the former Prime Minister Ambrazevicius-Brazaitis at Vytautas Magnus University who was appointed by the German occupying forces on 22nd June 1941. He neither intervened to stop the “spontaneous” murder of Jews in Lithuania which followed in the wake of the occupation nor did he implement steps to ensure that the murderers were arrested and brought to court. Quite the opposite, during the short time he was in power he was responsible not only for sending the Lithuanian Jews into the ghettos but also for commencing the construction of the ghetto in Kaunas. Ambrazevicius-Brazaitis thus prepared the way for the Holocaust.

Of course, the crimes of communism require analysis as well, though I fear that an equation of the crimes of communism and those of German fascism will lead to diminishing the genocide of the Jewish and Romani people. Unfortunately, this seems to become more prevalent in the Lithuanian culture of remembrance and memorisation.

I would very much welcome it if these and similar matters could be part of the discussion at this conference so that the Lithuanian government is informed of the concern of European citizens about this worrying trend.

Your sincerely,