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Wiesenthal Center Criticizes Latest Effort by Lithuanian Genocide Center to Minimize Lithuanian Complicity in Holocaust Murders

Jerusalem – The Simon Wiesenthal Center today harshly criticized the results of a study on Lithuanian participation in Holocaust crimes recently completed by the government-sponsored Center for the Study of the Genocide and Resistance of Residents of Lithuania. In a statement issued here today by its chief Nazi-hunter, Israel director Dr. Efraim Zuroff, the Center noted two major flaws in the findings of the report as presented by its coordinator Dr. Alfredas Ruksenas, in a report published by the Lithuanian news portal www.delfi.lt on October 25, 2013.

According to Zuroff:

"The findings of the report, as presented by the coordinator of this project, are clearly part of a systematic attempt by the Lithuanian government to minimize the role of ethnic Lithuanians in the mass murder of Jews during the Holocaust. Based on the records in our archives, I can unequivocally state, that the figure of 2,055 Lithuanians whose direct and indirect participation in Holocaust crimes was confirmed by this study, is a gross underestimate of the number of Lithuanians complicit in Shoa crimes, designed to deflect blame from local collaborators and hide the extensive scope of Lithuanian involvement in the mass murder of Jews, both in Lithuania and outside her borders.

"Also highly objectionable is the assertion by Dr. Ruskenas that those Lithuanians who indeed murdered Jews really had no choice but to do so, having received orders to commit murder from their superiors. Besides the fact that in many cases, these superiors were themselves Lithuanians, such arguments have been consistently and unequivocally rejected by courts all over the world, starting with the Nuremberg Trials."

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