



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism

10 August 2026

The Honorable
Lukas Alsys
Minister of Culture of Lithuania
Vilnius, Lithuania

Dear Minister Lukas Alsys,

I am deeply troubled by your recent remarks regarding the Snipiskes Cemetery site. As you noted during your remarks, the Snipiskes Cemetery site is “not just another structure”; it is a sacred ground of religious and historical significance, demanding our unwavering commitment to its protection and preservation. Claiming that the site’s fate remains “open,” however, risks legitimizing the ongoing and shameful attempts by members of the Seimas to further desecrate it.

I have already made my position on the Seimas’ May 12 decision well known. As I told both Prime Minister Sinkevicius and his predecessor, any resolution which would recommend developing a conference center on the cemetery site would send a clear signal to Jews around the world that not only can cemeteries be desecrated in Lithuania but that the rich, 600-year history of the Jews in this country before the Nazi regime is meaningless.

Cemeteries are a sacred ground for all of mankind. No self-respecting government, institution, or even community organization which claims to represent the needs of Jewish citizens can allow for their desecration. I urge you to oppose the pending parliamentary resolution and reject any attempt to develop the sacred site for profane purposes. This includes any efforts to transform the Palace of Culture and Sports into a conference center or other commercial or cultural facility.

God told Cain: "Your brother's blood cries out to Me from the earth." Now, the blood of every Lithuanian Jew denied a proper burial during the Holocaust cries out to us as well. Consistent with its historic obligation to do better, I call on Lithuania to stand with its Jewish communities on this important matter.

Any attempt to further desecrate this cemetery is shameful for the government of Lithuania and will be met with opposition. The blood of an entire people demands nothing less.

Sincerely,



Ambassador Rabbi Yehuda Kaploun
U.S. Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism