



Internationales
Auschwitz Komitee Stauffenbergstraße 13/14
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His Excellency
The Prime Minister
of the Republic of Poland
Mateusz Morawiecki, Esq.

New York/Berlin, 11.05.2021

Your Excellency,
dear Prime Minister,

my Name is Roman Kent and I am the President of the International Auschwitz Committee (IAC). The IAC brings Auschwitz survivors from all over the world together in one voice. As survivors of the German concentration and extermination camp Auschwitz-Birkenau we are highly concerned regarding the conflicts within the current national and international bodies whose missions in part are to advise and support both the Polish government and the directorate of the State Memorial and Museum.

The failings of both conceptual and educational aspects are especially apparent when they extend into the realms of Jewish and Christian memories. The impression currently being that one particular group is trying to 'nationalize' and monopolize the commemoration of historical facts.

Previously, I along with others who had worked on and with the now defunct International Auschwitz Council, found the Council to be the bridge that is currently missing. The Council brokered the mutual concerns of all groups having interest in remembrance of Auschwitz and was represented by myself, and my deputies from Poland, Israel, Germany and other countries throughout the world. It was a mistake that is increasingly apparent to not have extended the Council's term.

The question now is, where can issues concerning the Memorial be discussed? Several National Auschwitz Committees suggest that the International Auschwitz Committee should - for this purpose - appoint a new international board/council. My answer to this is as follows: We had excellent experience with the International Auschwitz Council previously appointed by the Polish Prime Ministers. The Council had interesting debates but was always able to achieve a unified and agreed upon decision. Two examples of how the Council proved itself was when the Auschwitz-education program was discussed and when the very often and highly controversial National Pavilions/Exhibitions were evaluated.

The Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial is recognized as a Humanitarian heritage, a place to be protected by all mankind. Funding for the conservation of the memorial was in large part performed via National committees lobbying their governments and through public opinion. These Nationals Committees opinion matter.

The entire survivor community is deeply committed to the Memorial with every fibre of our hearts. We respect and value the work of the directorate, all the colleagues at the Memorial, and the involvement and commitment of Poland to preserve this place of human suffering, with the world and for the world's remembrance. This is why we are requesting that the Polish government reappoint the International Council, a proven entity, as quickly as possible, and ensure that it has a broad representation of international experts.

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Time and again members of the survivor community ask us, how in our final years, can we shape our presence, how do we shape "our house"/"our Memorial"? With the help of the Polish state, the directorate of the Memorial and a new Council you can help us in our final years of life. The International Auschwitz Committees concerns will be shared with the public and I hope you will see the value and wisdom in reinstating the Council.

Yours most sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Roman Kent", with a long, sweeping tail extending to the right.

Roman Kent

President of the International
Auschwitz Committee