



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

April 13, 2018

Seventy-eight years ago, over 22 000 of innocent Poles were brutally murdered in Russia by the NKVD on the personal orders of Joseph Stalin. Today, as every year in April, we take the time to remember and honour the courageous Polish officers, policemen, officials, members of clergy as well as many other nationals who were systematically executed in Katyń. They represented the flower of the Polish nation.

We will never forget another monumental tragedy that occurred exactly eight years ago. On April 10, 2010, a plane carrying the President of Poland Professor Lech Kaczyński, his wife Maria, the First Lady of Poland, and other members of the Polish delegation en route to an event commemorating the 70th anniversary of the Katyń Massacre crashed near the city of Smolensk. That fateful day history repeated itself when the plane catastrophe claimed 96 lives of Poland's sons and daughters, the leaders of the nation, including high government officials, senior political and military leaders, parliamentarians and representatives of the clergy.

This past Tuesday, on April 10, on the eighth anniversary of Smolensk, Poland's President Duda unveiled in Warsaw a massive stone monument in honour of the victims of the 2010 presidential plane disaster.

On this Remembrance Day, I pay tribute to the Katyń Massacre victims as well as President Kaczyński, First Lady Maria, the former President of Poland in exile Mr Ryszard Kaczorowski and all casualties of the presidential plane crash, who, similarly to their counterparts seventy years earlier perished in extremely tragic circumstances in the Katyń region.

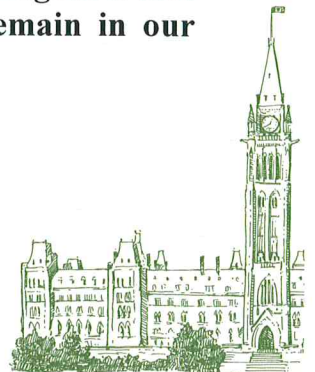
Katyń Memorial Day was established in 2007 by a resolution of the Sejm. As the Member of Parliament for Parkdale-High Park and the Vice Chair of the Canada-Poland Parliamentary Friendship Group, I would like to express my appreciation to everyone gathered here today in my riding. The Katyń Monument was erected by the tremendous Polish-Canadian community which I am proud to represent, as a way to ensure that these horrific events in Polish history are never forgotten and that both the Katyń Massacre and the Smolensk disaster victims remain in our collective memory. Cześć Ich Pamięci!

Arif Virani

Member of Parliament, Parkdale-High Park

Parliamentary Secretary for Multiculturalism

Vice Chair of the Canada-Poland Parliamentary Friendship Group

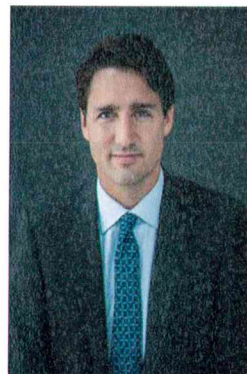




PRIME MINISTER • PREMIER MINISTRE

Statement from the Prime Minister of Canada

Today, we recognize not only the anniversary of the Katyn Massacre; an event which oversaw the destruction of the personal freedom and the lives of thousands of people during the Second World War, but also the anniversary of the Smolensk Air Disaster; a plane crash which cost the lives of leading Polish politicians and public figures, as well as relatives of the victims of the Katyn Massacre.



While both anniversaries are a time for solemn remembrance, it also provides us with the opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to always speak out against hate, and stand on guard against all forms of discrimination.

Today, I stand with Canadians across the country as we honour the memories of the lives lost in both the Katyn Massacre and the Smolensk Air Disaster.

Please accept my warmest regards and best wishes.

Ottawa
2018