



Statement of Katyn and Siberian Communities in the United States Involved in Advancing the Progress on 2012 Declassification and Public Release of Katyn Documentation

Washington, DC, September 10, 2012 – The Katyn and Siberian communities across the United States involved in advancing the release of the Katyn documentation welcome the declassification and public release of Katyn records of permanent historical value in the possession of the United States Government that relate to the extermination of the Polish citizens by the Soviet Union between September 1939 and June 1941, symbolically known as the Katyn Atrocity. The release of the Katyn documentation by the United States National Archives and Records Administration more than seventy-two years after the crime has a symbolic meaning. It underscores the enormity of the Katyn crime by reminding us that to this day the full truth about this unprecedented crime of historic proportions has not been revealed. The 2012 disclosure represents an important step on a long journey towards the full disclosure of the scale and character of the Katyn crime.

To remedy the tragic neglect and marginalization of the Katyn and Siberian communities, to address the harm suffered by the Katyn families, to recognize the destructive effect of the Katyn trauma on the Polish-American Community, and to remedy many decades of suppression of information about the real scale of the Katyn crime, the Katyn and Siberian communities in the United States call upon the United States Congress to establish the Katyn Institute as a gesture of good will to redress past wrongs.

We shall be mindful that to this day Katyn presents a moral crisis because the international community has not been able to muster the will to redress the legacy of mass extermination of the Polish people by the Soviet Union between 1939 and 1941. Appropriate measures were never implemented to reveal the full truth, to disclose the full scope of the crime, to assure some form of accountability, and to provide an appropriate redress mechanism for the Katyn victims. None of these pillars of international justice was made available to the Katyn and Siberian communities and the Polish people.

The Katyn Institute shall spearhead and stimulate scholarly research into the Katyn crime defined as mass extermination and mass displacement of the Polish citizens by the Soviet Union between September 1939 and June 1941. Scholarly research should also address the Katyn lie, cover up, persecution of the Katyn families, and suppression of the Katyn truth. Only through pro-active dissemination of the truth about Katyn will the public overcome its current misleading perception of Katyn as a massacre of the Polish officers in the Katyn forest, and be able to view Katyn for what it really represents: mass extermination of the Polish people in as many as 800 forests throughout the Soviet Union committed in conjunction with mass deportations of their spouses and children to the depths of the Soviet Union in conditions calculated to bring about their physical destruction. Only through appropriate scholarly incentives will the body of knowledge that has been made available to us today be adequately researched, properly analyzed, and honestly evaluated. Otherwise this unrewarding and politically inconvenient field of Katyn study will never develop, the full truth on Katyn will never emerge, the healing and closure will not be achieved, and the Katyn pattern will continue to endanger international peace and stability for generations to come.