

DECLARATION
OF THE SENATE OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND

of 14 March 2007

in order to honour rescue activities of Irena Sendler
and the Council for Aid to Jews "Żegota" in clandestine structures
of the Polish Underground State during World War II

During the Second World War Hitlerian Nazis undertook ruthless extermination of the Jewish Nation and people of the Jewish origin, isolating them in closed ghettos and then murdering in German extermination camps established in some countries of occupied Europe.

In Nazi-occupied Poland, any attempt to help Jews, to shelter them or rescue them from the Holocaust was a crime punishable by death, ruthlessly executed by the German occupying forces. The threat of losing life, however, did not discourage many people from helping the persecuted. For more than forty years the Institute of Yad Vashem in Jerusalem has honoured them with a medal "Righteous Among the Nations".

A group of women headed and directly run by Irena Sendler, acting within the Council for Aid to Jews, known by its code-name "Żegota", a structure of the Polish Underground State secret for the German invaders, in critical years of the Holocaust - between 1942 and 1944 - took (in so called Generalna Gubernia) an organized action to rescue the most helpless victims of Hitlerian Nazism - Jewish children.

The unit led by Irena Sendler, a group of people both lay and clergy, now mostly dead, helped in a decisive way to save at least 2500 children otherwise destined for death. For that reason Irena Sendler was called "mother of the Holocaust children"; in free Poland she received the Order of the White Eagle, Poland's highest civilian decoration, while in Israel she was recognized by Yad Vashem as a Righteous Among the Nations.

Further history of the modern world shows that threat of hatred and genocide still exists.

Devotion to the humanitarian values, which motivated Irena Sendler and other people to rescue human lives regardless of the risk of losing their own, still remains a pattern to follow.

The Senate of the Republic of Poland pays homage to 97-year-old Irena Sendler, as well as to other members, both living and already dead, of the clandestine Council for Aid to Jews and all people rescuing Jews in occupied Poland.

The Declaration is to be published in the Official Journal of The Republic of Poland, "Monitor Polski".

MARSHAL OF THE SENATE
Bogdan BORUSEWICZ