

# National Security Bureau

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## Opening of the cemetery in Bykivnia

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**Polish and Ukrainian Presidents Bronisław Komorowski and Viktor Yanukovich took part in the opening of the cemetery in Bykivnia, Ukraine on Friday. Head of the National Security Bureau Stanisław Koziej also took part in the event.**

Komorowski said that the memorial symbolizes "the unity of our Polish and Ukrainian fates."

The necropolis includes a Polish War Cemetery where almost 3.5 thousand Polish victims murdered by the Soviet secret police NKVD are buried.

We have had to wait a long time for this moment, supported by faith that it must finally come, the Polish president said. We have been overwhelmed by despair caused by the murdering of a considerable part of the nation's elite, urge to punish the perpetrators, a dream about justice and fear of repressions aimed at those who opposed the lies about Katyn, Komorowski added.

He stressed that the truth about the Katyn crime had been persistently defended by the victims' families and thanked them for their effort.

"The subsequent stations in this national way of sorrows were the war cemeteries in Katyn, Mednoye and Kharkov," the president said.

The president noted that building the Katyn national sanctuary would not be possible without the work and effort of numerous people. "I would like to stress the role of late Andrzej Przewoznik. We will never forget him and we will be always grateful for his share in building the first three cemeteries that commemorate the Katyn crime," Komorowski said.

He also thanked Andrzej Przewoznik's successor, Council for the Protection of Struggle and Martyrdom secretary Andrzej Kunert and his associates, for their work and involvement.

Bronisław Komorowski also thanked Ukraine's President Viktor Yanukovich for "his understanding and supporting our Polish efforts here in Bykivnia" and for efforts made by numerous Ukrainian partners while building the Polish cemetery.

"Here, on the site of the largest Ukrainian necropolis of the victims of Stalinism, where apart from the Polish graves there are also the ashes of over one hundred thousand Ukrainians, we together uncover and commemorate the most painful chapters of our nations' history," the president said.



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"A sovereign, democratic and solidary Poland has been possible also thanks to the sacrifice of their lives. We would not be worth it if we forgot those to whom we owe our freedom," Bronisław Komorowski added.



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Viktor Yanukovych said that the opening of the Bykivnia cemetery will go down in the history of Polish-Ukrainian relations as "a moment of solidarity of both nations" traumatised by the Stalinism. He expressed the Ukrainian nations' compassion towards the Polish nation.

Representatives of various nations found their final rest in this soil, he said.

According to him, "this memorial will be yet another reminder of the tragic history, which we must never forget." "During the times of Stalinist repressions, Ukraine lost millions of sons and daughters. Ukrainian scientists, artists, poets and writers are all buried in Bykivnia (...) declared enemies of the nation by Stalinist troikas," the Yanukovych recalled.



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"Ukraine paid a high price for its freedom. It is our sacred duty to cherish and respect the memory of those who fell victim to the terrifying Stalinist machine," the president said.

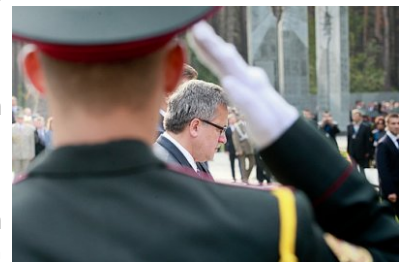
The memorial also pays tribute to Polish citizens murdered by the NKVD in the spring of 1940, Yanukovych stressed. The secretary of the Council for the Protection of Struggle and Martyrdom, Andrzej Kunert stressed that we owe the victims a prayer and memory.



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A sovereign Poland is today paying its dues to yet another group of Polish citizens in recognition of their highest sacrifice, Kunert said.

"I address those 3,435 Poles whose names we have carved here. From now on you are no longer anonymous victims, you have your place and rest in peace," Kunert concluded.



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In a homily said during a holy mass at the cemetery, Poland's field bishop Jozef Guzdek reminded that the truth had been hidden and distorted for many years.

"Current politics and interests of world superpowers tried to obscure the memory of this terrible crime," the bishop said.

"At last your dreams came true. For over 20 years we have lived in an independent state shaped by its citizens. Ultimately, you have won," he stressed.

After the ceremony President Bronisław Komorowski told reporters that he hoped the Polish victims of Stalinism buried in Belarus would also one day be honoured. "We all know that we need to make efforts to find, document and honour the victims included on the so-called Belarusian list. (...) we need persistent efforts and favourable circumstances to build the fifth Polish war cemetery. We will be striving to achieve this goal."

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