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**Wiesenthal Center 2014 Annual Report Praises New Legal Strategy by German Prosecutors Which Has Led to Impressive Results**

Jerusalem - The Simon Wiesenthal Center today released the initial findings of its thirteenth Annual Status Report on the Worldwide Investigation and Prosecution of Nazi War Criminals, which covers the period from April 1, 2013 until March 31, 2014 and awarded grades ranging from A (highest) to F to evaluate the efforts and results achieved by more than three dozen countries which were either the site of Nazi crimes or admitted Holocaust perpetrators after World War II.

Among the report's highlights are the following important developments:

1. The most important positive results achieved during the period under review were obtained in the wake of the implementation by the German judicial authorities of a legal strategy, which paves the way for the conviction of practically any person who served either in a Nazi death camp or in the Einsatzgruppen (mobile killing units). This approach, which was successfully used in Germany for the first time in about fifty years in the case of Ivan Demjanjuk, who was convicted for his service as an armed SS guard in the Sobibor death camp in May 2011, has led to an extensive search for those still alive who participated in the mass murders committed by these units. Thus in September 2013, Kurt Schrimm, the director of the German Central Office for the Clarification of Nazi Crimes, announced that his office had located 37 individuals who had served in the Auschwitz-Birkenau death camp (30 of whom were residing in Germany), whose prosecution he recommended. During the period under review, these cases have been directed to local prosecutors throughout Germany and initial legal steps have already been taken in more than a dozen cases.

2. As a result of this success, and the lack of significant results elsewhere, our 2014 Most Wanted List was compiled to focus on the death camps as well as the mobile killing squads, since it is those who served there who are the most likely to be prosecuted in the coming years.

3. The lack of political will to bring Nazis war criminals to justice and/or to punish them continues to be the major obstacle to achieving justice, particularly in post-Communist Eastern Europe. The campaign led by the Baltic countries to distort the history of the Holocaust and obtain official recognition that the crimes of the Communists are equal to those of the Nazis is another major obstacle to the prosecution of those responsible for the crimes of the Shoa.

The author of the report, Israel director Dr. Efraim Zuroff, who coordinates the Center’s research on Nazi war criminals worldwide, noted that the statistics in the report clearly show that a significant measure of justice can still be achieved against Nazi war criminals. “During the past 13 years, at least 101 convictions against Nazi war criminals have been obtained, at least 91 new indictments have been filed, and well over 3,000 new investigations have been initiated. Despite the somewhat prevalent assumption that it is too late to bring Nazi murderers to justice, the figures clearly prove otherwise, and we are trying to ensure that at least several of these criminals will to be brought to trial during the coming years. While it is generally assumed that it is the age of the suspects that is the biggest obstacle to prosecution, in many cases it is the lack of political will, more than anything else, that has hindered the efforts to bring Holocaust perpetrators to justice, along with the mistaken notion that it was impossible at this point to locate, identify, and convict these criminals. The success achieved by dedicated prosecutors, especially in the United States, Italy and Germany, should be a catalyst for governments all over the world to make a serious effort to maximize justice while it can still be obtained.”

Zuroff went on to explain that the Report’s purpose was to focus public attention on the issue and thereby “encourage all the governments involved to maximize their efforts to ensure that as many as possible of the unprosecuted Holocaust perpetrators will be held accountable for their crimes. In that respect, we seek to highlight both the positive results achieved during the period under review, especially in Germany, as well as the failures of countries like Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and the Ukraine which have consistently failed to hold any Holocaust perpetrators accountable, primarily due to a lack of the requisite political will, as well as Sweden and Norway which in principle refuse to investigate, let alone prosecute, due to a statute of limitations.”

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Also please visit our websites: [www.operationlastchance.org](http://www.operationlastchance.org/) and [www.wiesenthal.com](http://www.wiesenthal.com/)

We can be followed on Facebook (Efraim Zuroff) or on Twitter (@EZuroff).

**INVESTIGATION AND PROSECUTION REPORT CARD**

As part of this year’s annual status report, we have given grades ranging from A (highest) to F which reflect the Wiesenthal Center’s evaluation of the efforts and results achieved by various countries during the period under review.

The grades granted are categorized as follows:

**Category A**: Highly Successful Investigation and Prosecution Program

Those countries, which have adopted a proactive stance on the issue, have taken all reasonable measures to identify the potential suspected Nazi war criminals in the country in order to maximize investigation and prosecution and have achieved notable results during the period under review.

**Category B**: Ongoing Investigation and Prosecution Program Which Has Achieved Practical Success

Those countries which have taken the necessary measures to enable the proper investigation and prosecution of Nazi war criminals and have registered at least one conviction and/or filed one indictment, or submitted an extradition request during the period under review.

**Category C**: Minimal Success That Could Have Been Greater, Additional Steps Urgently Required

Those countries which have failed to obtain any convictions or indictments during the period under review but have either advanced ongoing cases currently in litigation or have opened new investigations, which have serious potential for prosecution.

**Category D**: Insufficient and/or Unsuccessful Efforts

Those countries which have ostensibly made at least a minimal effort to investigate Nazi war criminals but which failed to achieve any practical results during the period under review. In many cases these countries have stopped or reduced their efforts to deal with this issue long before they could have and could achieve important results if they were to change their policy.

**Category E**: No known suspects

Those countries in which there are no known suspects and no practical steps have been taken to uncover new cases.

**Category F-1**: Failure in principle

Those countries which refuse in principle to investigate, let alone prosecute, suspected Nazi war criminals because of legal (statute of limitation) or ideological restrictions.

 **Category F-2**: Failure in practice

Those countries in which there are no legal obstacles to the investigation and prosecution of suspected Nazi war criminals, but whose efforts (or lack thereof) have resulted in complete failure during the period under review, primarily due to the absence of political will to proceed and/or a lack of the requisite resources and/or expertise.

**Category X**: Failure to submit pertinent data

Those countries which did not respond to the questionnaire, but clearly did not take any action whatsoever to investigate suspected Nazi war criminals during the period under review.

A: Germany, United States

B: Italy\*

C: Croatia, Poland

D: Canada, Great Britain, Romania

E: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Costa Rica, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia

F-1: Norway, Sweden

F-2: Austria, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania

X: Belarus, Belgium, Bolivia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Chile, Colombia, France, Greece, Luxemburg, New Zealand, Netherlands, Paraguay, Russia, Spain, Ukraine, Uruguay

\* tentative grade pending receipt of official statistics

**MOST WANTED NAZI WAR CRIMINALS**

**As of April 1, 2014**

**A. Death Camp Personnel**

1. Auschwitz-Birkenau – 1,300,000 victims
2. Treblinka – 835,000 victims
3. Belzec – 600,000 victims
4. Majdanek – 360,000 victims
5. Chelmno – 320,000 victims
6. Sobibor – 250,000 victims

**B. Einsatzgruppen Personnel**

1. Einsatzgruppe A – primarily active in Baltics
2. Einsatzgruppe B – primarily active in Belarus
3. Einsatzgruppe C – primarily active in Northern Ukraine
4. Einsatzgruppe D – primarily active in Southern Ukraine

**C. Eight of the men on the 2013 Most Wanted List are still alive:**

2. Gerhard Sommer – Germany

3. Vladimir Katriuk – Canada

4. Hans (Antanus) Lipschis – Germany

5. Ivan (John) Kalymon – United States

6. Soeren Kam – Germany

7. Algimantas Dailide – Germany

9. Theodor Szehinskyj – United States

10. Helmut Oberlander – Canada

During the period under review, Lipschis (4) was arrested in May 2013 but was subsequently released for medical reasons. Csatary (1) and Gorshkow (8) passed away during the course of the past year.