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37-15

April 13, 2015

**Wiesenthal Center 2015Annual Report Praises Continued Efforts by German Prosecutors Based on New Legal StrategyWhich Has Yielded Significant Results**

Jerusalem - The Simon Wiesenthal Center today released the initial findings of its fourteenth Annual Status Report on the Worldwide Investigation and Prosecution of Nazi War Criminals, which covers the period from April 1, 2014 until March 31, 2015 and presents 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 Germany, in the wake of the implementation by the local 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 Kurt Schrimm, the director of the German Central Office for the Clarification of Nazi Crimes, has announced that his office located several dozen individuals who served in the Auschwitz-Birkenau and Majdanek death camps, whose prosecution he recommended. During the period under review, these cases have been directed to local prosecutors throughout Germany and two individuals have already been charged, with one case about to open next week.

2. As a result of this success, and the lack of significant results elsewhere, our 2015 Most Wanted List once again focuses 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 Nazi 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. EfraimZuroff, 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 14 years, at least 102 convictions against Nazi war criminals have been obtained, at least 98new indictments have been filed, and well over 3,500 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 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 Italy, Germany, andthe United States, should encourage 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 Austria, 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.”

##### For more information call Dr. Zuroff from mid-day April 14th: 972-50-721-4156 or in Israel: 050-721-4156

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 (EfraimZuroff) or on Twitter (@EZuroff).

**MOST WANTED NAZI WAR CRIMINALS**

**As of April 1, 2015**

**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. Current Individual Cases**

(Country of current residence precedes site of crimes)

1. **Gerhard Sommer** – Germany (Italy) – massacre of hundreds of civilians in Sant'Anna di Stazzema
2. **Vladimir Katriuk** – Canada (Belarus) – murder of Jews and non-Jews in various locations
3. **Alfred Stark** – Germany (Greece) – murder of Italian prisoners of war in Kefalonia
4. **Johann Robert Riss** – Germany (Italy) – murder of civilians near Padule di Fucecchio
5. **X** – Denmark (Belarus) – murder of Jews in Bobruisk
6. **Y** – Germany (Auschwitz) – accessory to murder of Hungarian Jews
7. **Z** – Norway (Poland and Ukraine) – murder of Jews in various locations
8. **Oskar Groening** – Germany (Auschwitz) – accessory to murder of Hungarian Jews
9. **AlgimantasDailide** – Germany (Lithuania) – arrested Jews and Poles executed by Nazis and Lithuanian security police
10. **Helmut Oberlander** – Canada (Ukraine) – served in Einstazkommando 10a (part of Einsatzgruppe D, which murdered an estimated 23,000 mostly Jewish civilians)