

Statement of the Director of the Warsaw Ghetto Museum

In relation to a civil lawsuit recently filed against prof. Barbara Engelking and prof. Jan Grabowski, the Warsaw Ghetto Museum regrets that the debate, which should take place in academic publications and as part of broadly understood academic activity, has ended in the courtroom.

The Warsaw Ghetto Museum does not consider itself an institution authorized or obligated to comment on a court trial, to which it is not a party. Nevertheless, we wish to emphasize that we fully support the necessity to preserve the freedom, integrity and objectivity of academic research. By creating one of the most important institutions aimed at researching and commemorating the Holocaust, we believe that the debate on the substantive content of the historical publications should take place as part of the academic discourse.

Being fully aware that the right to seek justice in a court is one of the fundamental rights and therefore without referring to any specific court proceedings, we would like to emphasize that any attempts to settle the value of academic findings by legal means may discourage scientists from conducting research on the Holocaust, disseminating its results, as well as openly debating about them. This, in turn, may adversely affect the deeper understanding of the complex history of the Holocaust and the German occupation of Poland. The memory of the millions of victims persecuted and murdered during World War II requires further research, carried out maintaining a particular sensitivity to all sources of knowledge.

Albert Stankowski

Director of the Warsaw Ghetto Museum

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