**RESOLUTION**

**OF THE SENATE OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND**

passed on 29 November 2022

**Making 2023 a Year of Memory for the Heroines and Heroes of the Warsaw Ghetto**

Over 400,000 Jews were imprisoned in the Warsaw Ghetto, created by the Germans in 1940. Tens of thousands died of hunger and disease. On 22 July 1942 the Germans began the Great Deportation of the ghetto’s inmates to the German death camp Treblinka, where nearly 300,000 Warsaw Jews lost their lives. In the autumn of 1942, after that operation had come to an end, some 60,000 Jews remained in what was known as the *Restgetto*. They were mainly young people working in German production plants, the “shops”. Under these circumstances, with nothing left to lose, these young Jews began to ponder the idea of putting up armed resistance. On 19 April 1943 the Jews of Warsaw rose up to fight the Germans in armed combat. The insurgents could not hope to prevail. They were driven by a desire to avenge themselves and to deal a heavy blow to the enemy. They chose to face death weapons in hand.

The April uprising was the biggest armed Jewish rebellion during World War II and the first urban uprising in occupied Europe. It was an unprecedented reaction to the barbarity of the German Nazis who had set out to destroy an entire people. On 16 May 1943, the day they blew up the Great Synagogue on Tłomackie Street, the Germans proclaimed the uprising over, but armed clashes continued for several more days. Most of the buildings in the ghetto were blown up or burnt down, and the entire area was razed to the ground. The heroism of those who faced the machine of destruction was exceptional. Several hundred fighters from the Jewish Combat Organisation (ŻOB), supported by the Jewish Military Union (ŻZW), stood no chance of defeating the enemy, but they did everything so that the world would learn about them. The voices of Mordechai Anielewicz, Mira Fuchrer, Tosia Altman, Arie Wilner, Marek Edelman, Mira Hajnsdorf, Cypora Gunsztat, Cywia Lubetkin, Symcha Rotem, Paweł Frenkel, and many others are still resounding.

The ghetto uprising, today commemorated in several locations in Warsaw, is one of the most symbolic and most frequently cited events in the history of the Holocaust. Ideological issues are key to understanding it: defending the honour of the dying Jewish people, and Jewish efforts to free Poland and Europe from the fascist yoke. Military aspects of the uprising usually take centre stage, but no less important was the attitude of civilians who, after yet another deportation operation in January 1943, joined in preparing shelters in ghetto basements and building underground tunnels, and put up resistance against the German occupiers by continuing to uphold basic human values, as seen in family, religious, academic and cultural life in the face of untold oppression. Educating the young generation, the activity of synagogues and houses of prayer, helping the sick and the starving, organising escapes and hiding places on the “Aryan” side was a no less significant or heroic resistance effort.

As citizens of Poland, a country thoroughly destroyed during World War II and to this day bearing painful marks of the German occupation in the social, cultural and infrastructural realm, we have a duty to guard the memory of the victims and to do everything in our power to prevent such tragedies from happening again.

This mission cannot be accomplished without educating the young generation. We believe that declaring 2023 a Year of Memory for the Heroines and Heroes of the Warsaw Ghetto will be an opportunity not only to recall Their testimonies, but also to reflect on universal values such as security, home, and freedom which we consider self-explanatory, but whose true meaning and weight we only discover when they come under siege.

On the 80th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, making 2023 a Year of Memory for the Heroines and Heroes of the Warsaw Ghetto, the Senate of the Republic of Poland pays tribute to those fallen as well as those who survived and continued to protest against criminal designs to destroy the Jewish people to the end of their days.

The resolution is to be published in the Official Journal of the Republic of Poland (*Monitor Polski*).

Marshall of the Senate

Tomasz Grodzki