

Remarks for Ambassador Mull
Re-dedication of Serock Jewish Cemetery; Serock
August 27, 2014

Thank you to Monika Krawczyk of the Foundation for the Preservation of Jewish Heritage in Poland for organizing today's ceremony, and to Commissioner Lee Seeman of the U.S. Commission for the Preservation of America's Heritage Abroad, and the Albert, Barnett, and Weiss families, for traveling such a long way to be here today.

I would also like to recognize the wojewoda and Mayor Sokolnicki; Rabbi Schudrich; and Mr. Jagiello, President of PKO Bank Polski.

We are here today to commemorate and re-dedicate the Serock Jewish community, and to celebrate the diversity it represented.

The Holocaust decimated this community, as it decimated Jewish communities across Poland and throughout Europe. Polish citizens of all religions suffered grievously at the hands of their occupiers, who murdered and imprisoned millions, and sought to destroy Poland's cultural heritage, including the Jewish cemetery that once stood here.

One of our most sacred obligations is to never forget the atrocities committed by the Nazis during World War II, so as to prevent such crimes from ever happening again. We must also remember the diversity that used to exist in Serock, and across Poland.

This beautiful memorial is a testament to the Jewish citizens who for generations lived peacefully here. It will serve as a permanent reminder of the rich one thousand year history of Jewish life in Poland, a legacy that Warsaw will celebrate this fall at the official opening of the Museum of the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw. Places such as this remind us that for hundreds of years Christians and Jews lived side by side in Serock and countless other cities and towns across the country. Not even the tragedy of the Holocaust can rob Poland of this remarkable tradition of tolerance and cooperation.

This memorial is also an important symbol of U.S. support for Poland's efforts to ensure that no one ever again must witness or suffer the horrible crimes that the citizens of Serock, and so many other towns and cities across Poland and Europe, endured.

I thank you for making this memorial possible, and for helping us to remember this incredibly important history in Poland. Thank you.