

**Speech of Mayor Antanas Vagonis**  
**Upon the Dedication of the Informational Stand**  
**On Synagogue Street in Rokiškis, Lithuania, September 6, 2015**

First of all, I would like to thank the coordinators of our [Rokiskis Regional] museum, who undertook this nice initiative. As you know, the process of reviving Jewish symbols began a very long time ago. And not long ago, when I myself was working for the municipal public works council, the sculptor, Albertas Jasiūnas, told me that he would need help in installing the memorial stone near the gates of the Jewish cemetery. And I told him that we would help, that it would not be a problem, that we could do it quickly, and that there would be no charge at all.

As you know, historically, and my advisor made some research, some time ago there was a large Jewish community [in this town], and the Jewish residents even outnumbered the Lithuanians.

It is very well said that we need to revive historical things. And today I want to touch upon the subject of bridges. Bridges serve not only for remembering and showing these [cultural] features but those bridges should also serve to invite people to come back over these bridges.

I know that our ethnic groups have been put into confrontation, and not just for one year. And for some things we should feel ashamed before your nation and some other nations. And we are constantly being put into confrontation with the Russians, and with the Poles, and even with our neighbors the Latvians, let alone the Jews.

We have to look at things the way they are now and think. There are no bad peoples, maybe only bad leaders of those peoples. It is not the fault of the Russians that they have such a leader as Putin, it is understood. Neither is it the fault of the Latvians or the Jews that they have been singled out. Indeed, every nation has an outstanding personality.

We are expressing our joy that you have not forgotten us. And I want to say more: Send a message to the whole world that if someone is longing for and would like to get back to their Motherland, we are looking forward to your coming back. ....

And I believe that, step by step, we have to come back. And, on my behalf, I promise, that our people will treat all nations with respect – with great respect.

And now, I thank you, all, and I thank everyone who worked to make this beautiful informational sign.