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Holocaust survivors inaugurate forest in the memory of Lithuanian Jews

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This [Tu Bishvat](#), 250 [Holocaust](#) survivors and their close relatives inaugurated a new forest in Southern Israel, as part of a series of Keren Kayemeth Le'Israel-Jewish National Fund (KKL-JNF) forest rehabilitation projects, including in the Negev desert.

This new forest is dedicated to the memory of Lithuania's Jews who were murdered during the Holocaust. As such, the Ambassador of the Republic of Lithuania to Israel, Lina Antanavičienė, attended the inauguration ceremony and planted a tree.

The Consul-General of Germany, representatives from the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the heads of leading Israeli NGOs assisting Holocaust survivors in Israel also attended the ceremony and planted trees.

Businessman and philanthropist, Roman Abramovich, is one of the main donors of the project. Of Jewish Lithuanian descent, Abramovich chose to fund the new forest in the memory of Lithuania's Jews.

"Especially in these days, of growing concerns over global warming, Mr. Abramovich's generous support is helping KKL-JNF in doing its important work – taking care of our trees, fighting desertification and in blooming and reviving the Negev and Israeli desert. We are proud to lead the way in afforestation and in being a world example of ecological progress in water and agriculture," said KKL-JNF World Chairman Daniel Atar.

In the memory of Lithuania's Jews who were murdered during the Holocaust, KKL-JNF also launched the website "[plant a tree, seed a memory](#)," as a virtual memorial. The platform allows people to share stories of Jews from Lithuania, and to honor their memory by planting a tree, in their name, in Israel.

Before World War II, the Jewish population in Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania exceeded 60,000 people. Vilnius had 105 official synagogues and six daily Jewish newspapers. 141,000 out of Lithuania's 168,000 Jews were murdered in the Holocaust.

Planting a tree sends a message of remembrance but also a message of a reborn people rising out of the heaps of rubble.

Source: <https://www.jpost.com/Israel-News/Holocaust-survivors-inaugurate-forest-in-the-memory-of-Lithuanian-Jews-618226>