



FAINA KUKLIANSKY

“NO LITHUANIA WITHOUT JEWS, NO JEWS WITHOUT LITHUANIA ”

Chairperson of the Jewish (Litvak) community of Lithuania (2013 – now)

Chairperson of the Jewish community of Vilnius (2013-2017)

Advocate, arbiter (2004–now)

Legal practitioner (1977– 2004)

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Background: Both parents are *Litvaks*—original Lithuanian Jews, survivors of the Holocaust.

Father Samuel Kukliansky - advocate, scholar of law, criminology expert, was also a professor at the Law University of Lithuania and a post-doctoral fellow in social sciences. Mother Klara –former accountant. Both deceased and buried in Israel. Grandparents Zisl and Saul – both worked in a medical field – come from Lithuanian town of Veisiejai. Grandmother Zisl perished at the hands of Nazis and their Lithuanian collaborators.

Citizenship: Lithuanian, Israeli.

Children: Son Rafael—sound engineer, DJ, currently resides in Australia, daughter Ruth – clinical psychologist, resides and works in Vilnius, Lithuania. She holds a doctoral degree in clinical psychology (Traumatic memories of the Holocaust survivors’ and their effect on the identity experience). Also Ruth is the director of Vilnius **Sholom Aleichem** ORT gymnasium.

Education: Master in Law at Vilnius University, various post graduate courses.

Professional experience: Lawyer, political lobbyist and arbiter from 1977, represented numerous foreign companies in Lithuania. Career in law started as a criminal investigator, later – prosecutor. Member of Lithuanian and International law associations.

Activity representing Lithuanian Jewish Community interests: During the Reform Movement of Lithuania elected as a member of the first board of the Jewish community of Lithuania in 1989. Later became active as a lawyer representing Jewish Community interests on a national level.

In 2013 elected as a chair of the Jewish community of Lithuania and as a chair of Vilnius Jewish Community (lay leader position). In May, 2017 re-elected as chair of Lithuanian Jewish Community. Co-chair of The Foundation for Disposal of Good Will Compensation for the Immovable Property of Jewish Religious Communities, established in 2011 after the negotiations between Lithuanian governmental institutions and a delegation comprised of representatives from various Lithuanian and international Jewish organizations, which lasted more than a decade, culminated in the enactment of the Law on Good Will Compensation. In 2016 Kukliansky participated at the initiative group at Lithuanian Parliament regarding the corrections at Lithuanian Citizenship Law which led to the necessary amendments adoption by the Lithuanian Parliament ensuring the rights to citizenship of Jews who left Lithuania between the two world wars and their descendants.

For many years, F. Kukliansky dedicated herself to the Jewish Community of Lithuania and Jews living beyond the borders of Lithuania. She strived to ensure that Lithuanian Jews were fully integrated into the Lithuanian society, and that Lithuanians as well as people from different backgrounds would become acquainted with the culture, religion, and way of life of the Jewish people. According to F. Kukliansky, people living in one society need to know and understand each other better in order to prevent a repeat of the tragedy that befell Jews in Lithuania, resulting in the near-total annihilation of the Lithuanian Jewry.

Awards:

The Jewish Research Institute YIVO has awarded Lithuanian Jewish Community chair Faina Kukliansky for her contributions in strengthening the Jewish community in Lithuania in 2014. Kukliansky received numerous awards previously from the Lithuanian state, including the Order of the Knight's Cross *For Merits to Lithuania* awarded by the President of Lithuania H.E. Ms. Dalia Grybauskaitė.

In 2019 the Minister of Foreign Affairs Linas Linkevičius conferred the Foreign Ministry's award of honor – Lithuania's Diplomacy Star – on Faina Kukliansky, Chair of the Jewish (litvak) Community of Lithuania. She has been awarded for her active role in preparing important international agreements, cooperation between the Lithuanian Jewish Community and the Foreign Ministry, her personal contribution to the drafting, implementation on the Law of the Good Will Compensation, and the Community's active participation in projects of the Lithuanian diplomatic representations.