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MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

on behalf of the EPP Group

on the 80th anniversary of the start of the Second World War and importance of European remembrance for the future of Europe

**European Parliament resolution on the 80th anniversary of the start of the Second World War and importance of European remembrance for the future of Europe**

The European Parliament,

– having regard to the universal principles of human rights and the fundamental principles of the European Union as a community based on common values,

– having regard to the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted on 10 December 1948,

– having regard to its Resolution of 12 May 2005 on the 60th anniversary of the end of the Second World War in Europe,

– having regard to Resolution 1481 of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe of 26 January 2006 on the need for international condemnation of crimes of totalitarian Communist regimes,

– having regard to the Framework Decision on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law adopted by the Council of the European Union on 26 February 2008,

– having regard to the Prague Declaration on European Conscience and Communism adopted on 3 June 2008,

– having regard to its Declaration on the proclamation of 23 August as European Day of Remembrance for the Victims of Stalinism and Nazism adopted on 23 September 2008,

- having regard to its Resolution of 2 April 2009 on European conscience and totalitarianism,

- having regard to Report of 22 December 2010 from the Commission to the Parliament and the Council on the memory of the crimes committed by totalitarian regimes in Europe,

- having regard to the Council Conclusions of 9-10 June 2011 on the memory of the crimes committed by totalitarian regimes in Europe,

- Warsaw Declaration of 23 August 2011 on the European Day of Remembrance for Victims of Totalitarian Regimes,

- having regard to the Joint Declaration of 23 August 2018 of the Government representatives of European Union countries to commemorate the victims of Communism,

– having regard to the resolutions and declarations on the crimes of totalitarian Communist regimes adopted by a number of national parliaments,

– having regard to Rule 132 of its Rules of Procedure,

1. Whereas this year marks the 80th anniversary of the outbreak of the Second World War which brought the suffering of people on the scale unseen to the humanity before and occupation of countries in Europe for many decades to come;
2. Whereas 80 years ago on 23 August 1939 the Communist Soviet Union and Nazi Germany signed a non-aggression pact known as the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and its secret protocols, dividing Europe and territories of independent states into spheres of interest between the two totalitarian regimes and paving the way to the outbreak of the Second World War;
3. Whereas as a direct consequence of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact as well as the subsequent Nazi-Soviet friendship and border treaty of 29 September 1939, the Polish Republic was invaded first by Hitler and two weeks later by Stalin, which brought about the annihilation of Polish independence and unprecedented tragedy to the Polish nation, the Communist Soviet Union occupied territories of Romania, in December 1939 started an aggressive war against Finland and in June 1940 annexed by force the independent Republics of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia;
4. Whereas as an ally and partner of Nazi Germany, the Communist Soviet Union contributed politically and economically to Hitler’s conquest of Western Europe by providing Germany during the first 22 months of the war with a secure rear, manifold strategic goods including oil and grain, and political support by ordering, for example, the French communists not to oppose Nazi invasion;
5. Whereas the Kremlin leaders’ strategic goal was to advance the communist world revolution by instigating war between Nazi Germany and Western allies so that both sides might weaken each other until their countries would become ripe for sovietisation – plans that were presented in Stalin’s secret address to the Politburo on 19 August 1939;
6. Whereas after the defeat of the Nazi regime and the end of the Second World War a part of European countries enjoyed post-war rebuilding and reconciliation, while other European countries remained under Soviet occupation and Communist dictatorships for half a century and continued to be deprived of freedom, sovereignty, dignity, human rights and socio-economic development;
7. Whereas the crimes of Nazi regime were evaluated and punished by the Nuremberg process and there continues to be an urgent need for full awareness and moral as well as a legal assessment of the crimes of Stalinism and Communist dictatorships;
8. Whereas in some EU Member States the Communist regime has been declared by law - a "criminal regime", and the Communist party - "a criminal organisation";
9. Whereas the enlargement of the EU, beginning in 2004, for the European countries that suffered under Soviet occupation and Communist dictatorships signifies their return to the European family where they belong;
10. Whereas the remembrance of victims of totalitarian regimes, recognition and awareness of the shared European legacy of crimes committed by Communist, Nazi and other dictatorships is of vital importance for the unity of Europe and its people and for building EU resilience to modern external threats;
11. Whereas in its historic Resolution on the situation in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, adopted on 13 January 1983 in reaction to the "Baltic Appeal" of 45 nationals from these countries, the European Parliament condemned the fact that the occupation of these formerly independent and neutral States by the Soviet Union occurred in 1940 following the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact and continued;
12. Whereas 30 years ago, on 23 August 1989, the 50th anniversary of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and the remembrance of the victims of totalitarian regimes was commemorated by the Baltic Way, an unprecedented demonstration of 2 million Lithuanians, Latvians and Estonians who joined their hands in a living chain spanning from Vilnius through Riga to Tallinn,
13. Stresses that the Second World War, the most devastating war in Europe’s history, was started as the immediate result of the notorious Nazi-Soviet non-aggression and cooperation pact of 23 August 1939, also called the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, whereby two totalitarian regimes that shared the goal of world conquest have divided Europe into two zones of influence;
14. Reminds that the Nazi and Communist regimes brought about mass murders, genocide, deportations and loss of life and freedom in the 20th century on a scale unseen in human history, reminds the horrific crime of the Holocaust perpetrated by the Nazi regime;
15. Expresses its deep respect for each victim of these totalitarian regimes and calls on all European institutions and actors to do their utmost to ensure the remembrance and judgement of horrific totalitarian crimes against humanity and systemic gross human rights violations as well as to guarantee that such crimes will never be repeated;
16. Condemns in strongest terms the acts of aggression, crimes against humanity and mass human rights violations perpetrated by the totalitarian Nazi and Communist regimes;
17. Calls on all Member states of the EU take a clear and principled assessment of the crimes and aggressions perpetrated by the totalitarian Communist regimes as well as the crimes and aggressions of the Nazi regimes;
18. Calls on all EU Member States to commemorate 23 August as the European Day of Remembrance for the victims of totalitarian regimes at both the EU and governmental level, as well as to raise the younger generation’s awareness, adding the history and analysis of the consequences of totalitarian regimes into school curricula and textbooks of all European schools;
19. Calls on the Commission to provide effective support for projects of historic memory and remembrance in the Member States and for the activities of the Platform of European Memory and Conscience;
20. Points out that the Eastern and Central European countries with their accession to the EU and NATO have not only returned to the European family of free democratic countries, but also demonstrated unprecedented success, with the assistance of the EU, in reforms and socio-economic development, stresses, however, that the European peace and integration project will not be complete until all European countries which choose the path of European reforms, such as Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia, become fully fledged Members of the EU;
21. Expresses its view, that the success of Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova, which can be created only by the process of their integration into the EU, will be the most powerful instrument, by the force of example, to assist positive transformation in Russia, which would allow Russia to finally overcome tragic consequences of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact;
22. Maintains, that Russia remains the greatest victim of the Communist totalitarianism and that her development to a democratic state will be impeded as long as the government, political elite and propaganda continues to whitewash Communist crimes and glorify the Soviet totalitarian regime, therefore calls on Russian society to come to terms with its tragic past;
23. Is deeply concerned about efforts of today's leadership of Russia to distort the historic facts and whitewash crimes committed by the Soviet totalitarian regime and considers them as a dangerous component of the information war waged against democratic Europe that aims to divide Europe, therefore calls on the Commission to decisively counter these efforts;
24. Draws attention to the continued usage of symbols of the Communist totalitarian regime in public space as well as for commercial purposes and reminds that a number of European countries have banned the use of both Nazi and Communist symbols;
25. Notes that the continued existence in some Member States of monuments and memorials in public space (parks, squares, streets etc.), glorifying the Soviet army, which in these countries was the occupier, creates conditions for distortion of truth about the consequences of the Second World War and for propagating the totalitarian political system;
26. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the governments and parliaments of the Member States.