



Ms. Věra Jourová
Vice-President of the European Commission

08 May, 2020

Dear Madam Vice-President,

On 19 September 2019, the European Parliament adopted the Resolution on Importance of European remembrance for the future of Europe with a vast majority of votes. In this Resolution, the European Parliament has called for 25 May to be established as International Day of Heroes of the Fight against Totalitarianism.

On that day in 1948, the Auschwitz hero Rotamaster Witold Pilecki was executed by the communist authorities. In 1940 Pilecki has volunteered himself to be arrested and sent to Auschwitz to collect information about Nazi atrocities for the Polish resistance and the Allies. After 947 days spent in the concentration camp, he succeeded to escape. After the defeat of the Warsaw uprising, Pilecki was taken to Murnau as prisoner of war, where he was liberated by the U.S. Army at the end of the Second World War. Pilecki left Murnau and was reassigned to the military intelligence division of the Polish II Corps in Italy. While stationed there he began to write a monograph on his experiences at Auschwitz. Upon the orders of his superiors, Pilecki returned to Poland ruled by Stalin's puppet communist regime, where he remained loyal to the Polish government in exile and began organising intelligence gathering network. In 1947 Pilecki was arrested by the communist authorities. After long and brutal interrogations, he was executed and buried in a mass grave. His life and death symbolises great bravery, ultimate sacrifice and unwavering resistance to any form of totalitarianism. His fate also demonstrates that for many Europeans, the end of the Second World War has not brought peace, but many decades of continued suffering.

Announcing 25 May as International Day of Heroes of the Fight against Totalitarianism would be an expression of respect and would pay a tribute to all those who, by fighting tyranny, demonstrated their heroism and true love for humankind. It would also provide future generations with a clear example of taking stand in the face any totalitarianism.

Madam Vice-President,

Let us address you with a call to take steps to announce 25 May as European Day of Heroes of the Fight against Totalitarianism and also to mark this occasion this year by a public campaign in the social media.

Sincerely,

Members of the Informal Group on European Remembrance:

Rasa JUKNEVIČIENĖ, EPP, Lithuania

Andrius KUBILIUS, EPP, Lithuania

Ivan ŠTEFANEC, EPP, Slovakia

Javier ZARZALEJOS, EPP, Spain

Dace MELBĀRDE, ECR, Latvia

Anna FOTYGA, ECR Poland

Liudas MAŽYLIS, EPP, Lithuania

Alexandr VONDRA, ECR, Czechia

Sandra KALNIETE, EPP, Latvia

Jacek SARYUSZ-WOLSKI, ECR, Poland

Izabela KLOC, ECR, Poland