



Plenary sitting

B9-0097/2019

17.9.2019

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statements by the Council and the Commission
pursuant to Rule 132(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on the 80th anniversary of the start of the Second World War and the
importance of European remembrance for the future of Europe
(2019/2819(RSP))

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on behalf of the PPE Group

European Parliament resolution on the 80th anniversary of the start of the Second World War and the importance of European remembrance for the future of Europe (2019/2819(RSP))

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 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations 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 on 8 May 1945¹,
- 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 Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA of 28 November 2008 on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law²,
- having regard to the Prague Declaration on European Conscience and Communism, adopted on 3 June 2008,
- having regard to its declaration of 23 September 2008 on the proclamation of 23 August as European Day of Remembrance for Victims of Stalinism and Nazism³,
- having regard to its resolution of 2 April 2009 on European conscience and totalitarianism⁴,
- having regard to the Commission's report of 22 December 2010 on the memory of the crimes committed by totalitarian regimes in Europe (COM(2010)0783),
- having regard to the Council conclusions of 9-10 June 2011 on the memory of the crimes committed by totalitarian regimes in Europe,
- having regard to the 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 by the government representatives of eight EU Member States commemorating the victims of Communism,

¹ OJ C 92 E, 20.4.2006, p. 392.

² OJ L 328, 6.12.2008, p. 55.

³ OJ C 8 E, 14.1.2010, p. 57.

⁴ OJ C 137 E, 27.5.2010, p. 25.

- 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(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas this year, 2019, marks the 80th anniversary of the outbreak of the Second World War, which brought human suffering on an unprecedented scale and led to the occupation of countries in Europe for many decades to come;
 - B. whereas 80 years ago, on 23 August 1939, the Communist Soviet Union and Nazi Germany signed the Treaty on Non-Aggression, known as the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, and its secret protocols, thereby dividing Europe and the territories of independent states into spheres of interest between the two totalitarian regimes and paving the way for the outbreak of the Second World War;
 - C. whereas, as a direct consequence of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, followed by the Nazi-Soviet Boundary and Friendship Treaty of 28 September 1939, the Polish Republic was invaded first by Hitler and two weeks later by Stalin, which brought about the decisive loss of Polish independence and unprecedented tragedy to the Polish nation; whereas, as an additional consequence, the Communist Soviet Union on 30 November 1939 started an aggressive war against Finland and in June 1940 occupied and annexed parts of Romania (territories that were never returned) and annexed by force the independent Republics of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia;
 - D. 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 area, manifold strategic goods including oil and grain, and political support by ordering, for example, the French communists not to oppose the Nazi invasion;
 - E. whereas the strategic goal of the Kremlin leaders was to advance the global communist revolution by instigating war between Nazi Germany and the Western allies so that both sides might weaken each other until they became ripe for sovietisation – plans that were presented in Stalin’s secret address to the Politburo on 19 August 1939;
 - F. whereas after the defeat of the Nazi regime and the end of the Second World War, some European countries enjoyed post-war rebuilding and reconciliation, while others 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;
 - G. whereas the crimes of the Nazi regime were tried and punished under the Nuremberg process; whereas there continues to be an urgent need for a complete awareness and a moral and legal appraisal of the crimes perpetrated by Stalinism and Communist dictatorships;
 - H. whereas in some EU Member States, the Communist regime has been declared a ‘criminal regime’ by law, and the Communist Party a ‘criminal organisation’;
 - I. whereas the 2004 EU enlargement process, which involved some European countries

that had suffered under Soviet occupation and Communist dictatorships, marked the return of those countries to the European family, where they belong;

- J. whereas the remembrance of the victims of totalitarian regimes and the recognition and awareness of the shared European legacy of crimes committed by Communist, Nazi and other dictatorships are of vital importance for the unity of Europe and its people and for building the EU's resilience to today's external threats;
 - K. whereas in its historic resolution on the situation in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, adopted on 13 January 1983⁵ in response to the Baltic Appeal of 45 nationals from those countries, the European Parliament condemned the fact that the occupation of those formerly independent and neutral states by the Soviet Union occurred in 1940 following the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, and had continued to that day;
 - L. 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 hands to form a human chain spanning their three nations, from Vilnius, to Riga, to Tallinn;
1. Stresses that the Second World War, the most devastating war in Europe's history, was started as an immediate result of the notorious Nazi-Soviet Treaty on Non-Aggression of 23 August 1939, also known as the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, and its secret protocols, whereby two totalitarian regimes that shared the goal of world conquest divided Europe into two zones of influence;
 2. Recalls that in the 20th century, the Nazi and Communist regimes brought about mass murders, genocide, deportations and loss of life on a scale hitherto unseen in human history; recalls the horrific crime of the Holocaust perpetrated by the Nazi regime;
 3. Expresses its profound respect for each and every victim of these totalitarian regimes and calls on all the European institutions and actors to do their utmost to ensure the remembrance and due process of horrific totalitarian crimes against humanity and systemic gross human rights violations, and to guarantee that such crimes will never be repeated;
 4. Condemns in the strongest possible terms the acts of aggression, crimes against humanity and mass human rights violations perpetrated by the totalitarian Nazi and Communist regimes;
 5. Calls on all EU Member States to take a clear and principled judgement of the crimes and acts of aggression perpetrated by the totalitarian Communist regimes and the Nazi regime;
 6. Expresses its concern at the rise of far-right and far-left movements in the Member States;
 7. Calls on all Member States to commemorate 23 August as the European Day of

⁵ OJ C 42, 14.2.1983, p. 77.

Remembrance for the victims of totalitarian regimes at both EU and governmental level, and to raise awareness amongst the younger generation, by ensuring that the history and analysis of the consequences of totalitarian regimes is included on the curricula and in the textbooks of all European schools;

8. Calls on the Commission to provide effective support for projects promoting historical memory and remembrance in the Member States and for the activities of the Platform of European Memory and Conscience, and to allocate adequate financial resources under the Europe for Citizens programme in order to support the commemoration and remembrance of the victims of totalitarianism;
9. Points out that in the light of their accession to the EU and NATO, the countries of Eastern and Central Europe have not only returned to the European family of free democratic countries, but also shown unprecedented success, with the EU's assistance, in implementing reforms and ushering in socio-economic development; stresses, however, that the European peace and integration project will not be complete until all European countries that choose the path of European reforms, such as Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia, become fully-fledged members of the EU;
10. Considers that the success of Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova, which can be secured only through the process of their integration into the EU, will be the most powerful instrument, by force of precedent, to foster positive transformation in Russia, which would, for its part, allow Russia to finally overcome the tragic consequences of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact;
11. Maintains that Russia remains the greatest victim of Communist totalitarianism and that its development into a democratic state will be impeded as long as the government, the political elite and political propaganda continue to whitewash Communist crimes and glorify the Soviet totalitarian regime; calls, therefore, on all quarters of Russian society to come to terms with their tragic past;
12. Is deeply concerned about the efforts of today's leadership of Russia to distort historical fact and to whitewash the crimes committed by the Soviet totalitarian regime; regards these attempts as a dangerous component of the information war that is being waged against democratic Europe and that seeks to divide our continent; calls on the Commission, therefore, to counter these efforts in a decisive manner;
13. Draws attention to the continued usage of the symbols of the Communist totalitarian regime in public spaces and for commercial purposes, recalling that a number of European countries have banned the use of both Nazi and Communist symbols;
14. Notes that the continued existence in the public spaces (parks, squares, streets, etc.) of some Member States of monuments and memorials glorifying the Soviet army, which had occupied those self-same countries, creates the conditions for the distortion of truth about the consequences of the Second World War and for propagating the totalitarian political system;
15. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the governments and parliaments of the Member States.