

# EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2004



2009

23 September 2004

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## WRITTEN DECLARATION

pursuant to Rule 116 of the Rules of Procedure

by Janusz Wojciechowski, Zdzisław Podkański and Zbigniew Kuźmiuk

on the 65th anniversary of the outbreak of World War II

Lapse date: 23 December 2004

**Written declaration on the 65th anniversary of the outbreak of World War II**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to Rule 116 of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. noting that 65 years ago, on the 1 September 1939, Hitler's Germans committed a brutal and criminal act of aggression against Poland, and that with the Soviet Union joining in this aggression on the 17 September 1939, the Second World War started, taking, over a period of six years, a heavy toll of 50 million lives and causing huge material destruction both in Europe and the world;
- B. recalling that Poland was the first country to put up military resistance against Hitler's conquests; Poles fought on all fronts in this war for their own freedom and for that of others, for the freedom of their homeland and of Europe; Poland suffered the heaviest losses in this war with six million Polish citizens, almost a quarter of its population, lost, 600 thousand killed in action, others as a result of criminal extermination by the occupiers;
- C. recalling this tragic time out of a concern for the fact that history is, unfortunately, frequently distorted; Poland, the first and biggest victim of the war, is sometimes treated as the guilty party, an example of this attitude being the claims presented against Poland by Germans who lost property as a result of the post-war border changes; these claims are rejected as groundless and unjust, as the perpetrators, not the victims, should pay war damages;
- D. considering that another example of the distortion of history is laying blame for the crimes of the Holocaust on Poland and Poles; recalling that on the 1 September 1939, Poland was the first to put up military resistance against the Hitlerite Germans, who originated, organised and executed the Holocaust; and that countless Poles came to the rescue of persecuted Jews, even though they were risking their lives to do so, earning the right to be called Righteous Among the Nations;
  - 1. Believes that such evil as recalled in this tragic time will never again occur with the complicity of Poland and Europe, and that European integration, if it is sincere, based on reconciliation and truth, should promote this;
  - 2. Instructs its President to forward this declaration, together with the names of the signatories, to the Council, Commission and governments of the Member States.