

WRITTEN QUESTION E-3775/09
by Inese Vaidere (PPE)
to the Commission

Subject: 'Commission to counter attempts to falsify history to the detriment of Russia's interests' established in the Russian Federation by decree of President Medvedev

The EU-Russia partnership is based on several policy areas and the idea of Common beliefs, goals and commitments. One of the most important of those is the common area of Justice.

The latest facts, however, seem to show the opposite. In April, in reply to my written question No. P-3239/09, EU response to the Russian legislation project penalizing everyone who analyses history from a different perspective than that of the Russian government, Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner stated 'If and when the current legislative discussions in the Russian Federation are enacted into law, the Commission will look into the actions that may be appropriate at that time.'

On May 15, 2009 President Dmitry Medvedev issued Decree No. 549 establishing 'Commission to counter attempts to falsify history to the detriment of Russia's interests'. President Medvedev stresses that this commission will fight malicious and aggressive attempts to deny the Soviet Union's victory over Nazi Germany, including combating the so-called rebirth of Nazism in the Baltic states. This objective has been repeated on multiple occasions by various Russian politicians, including Konstantin Zatulin, first deputy chair of the committee of the State Duma for CIS affairs and relations with Russians abroad, member of the newly-formed commission, and, currently, the main author of this legislation.

The list of the 28 members of the new commission clearly demonstrates its fundamentally political, not history-based, character. It is headed by the Chief of Staff of the Presidential Executive Office and includes - among others - the Russian military's Chief of Staff and representatives of the Federal Security Service, the Foreign Intelligence Service, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Public Chamber.

What is the EU's official opinion on the formation of this commission and the legislation establishing it? Most important, precisely what actions does the EU consider to be appropriate in response, and when will they be pursued?