

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2004



2009

Session document

26.3.2009

B6-0171/2009

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on statements by the Council and Commission

pursuant to Rule 103(2) of the Rules of Procedure

by Annemie Neyts-Uyttebroeck and István Szent-Iványi

on behalf of the ALDE Group

on European conscience and totalitarianism

European Parliament resolution on European conscience and totalitarianism

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its many previous resolutions on democracy and respect for fundamental rights and freedoms, including that of 12 May 2005 on the future of Europe sixty years after the Second World War¹, that of 23 October 2008 on commemorating the victims of the Holodomor², and that of 15 January 2009 on Srebrenica³,
 - having regard to Rule 103(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the memories of Europe's tragic past must be kept alive in order to honour the victims, condemn the perpetrators and lay the foundations of reconciliation based on truth and remembrance,
- B. whereas from the outset European integration has been a response to the suffering inflicted by two world wars and the Nazi tyranny that led to the Holocaust, and to the expansion of totalitarian and undemocratic communist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe, as well as a way of overcoming deep divisions and hostility in Europe through cooperation and integration and of ending war and securing democracy in Europe,
- C. whereas the process of European integration has been successful and has now led to a European Union that encompasses the countries of Central and Eastern Europe which lived under communist regimes from the end of World War II until the early 1990s, and whereas the earlier accessions of Greece, Spain and Portugal helped secure democracy in the south of Europe,
1. Expresses respect for all victims of totalitarian and undemocratic regimes in Europe and pays tribute to those who fought against tyranny and oppression;
 2. Renews its commitment to a peaceful and prosperous Europe founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights;
 3. Underlines the importance of keeping the memories of the past alive, because there can be no reconciliation without remembrance; reconfirms its united stand against all totalitarian rule from whatever ideological background;
 4. Recalls that the most recent act of genocide in Europe took place in Srebrenica as late as July 1995 and that constant vigilance is needed to fight undemocratic, xenophobic, authoritarian and totalitarian ideas and tendencies;

¹ Texts adopted: P6_TA(2005)0180.

² Texts adopted: P6_TA(2008)0523.

³ Texts adopted: P6_TA(2009)0028.

5. Underlines that, in order to strengthen European awareness of crimes committed by totalitarian and undemocratic regimes, documentation of and testimony to Europe's troubled past must be supported, as there can be no reconciliation without remembering;
6. Regrets that 20 years after the collapse of the communist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe, access to documents that are of personal relevance or needed for scientific research is still unduly restricted in some Member States; calls for a genuine effort in all Member States towards opening up archives, including those of the former internal security services, secret police and intelligence agencies;
7. Declares that European integration as a model of peace and reconciliation represents a free choice by the peoples of Europe to commit to a shared future, and that the European Union has a particular responsibility to promote and safeguard democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law, both inside and outside the European Union;
8. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to make further efforts to strengthen the teaching of European history and to underline the historical achievement of European integration and the stark contrast between the tragic past and the peaceful and democratic societal order in today's European Union;
9. Reiterates its consistent support for a strengthened international justice system, through the establishment of the International Criminal Court and other specialised courts;
10. Calls for the proclamation of 23 August as a Europe-wide Remembrance Day for victims of all totalitarian and authoritarian regimes, to be commemorated with dignity and impartiality;
11. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the parliaments of the Member States, the governments and parliaments of the candidate countries, the governments and parliaments of the countries associated with the European Union, and the governments and parliaments of the Members of the Council of Europe.