



**TOTALITARIAN MEMORY OF
EUROPE:
ACTION FOR
RECONCILIATION**

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TOTALITARIAN MEMORY OF EUROPE,

- The narrative of 20th Century History of Europe is unbalanced and incomplete.
- Europe has to recognize the double legacy of totalitarianism, Nazism and Stalinism, as its common legacy.
- Europe's history must be thoroughly studied and its common historical narrative must encompass the entire history of the Iron Curtain (1945– 1991).
- Europe will not be reunited unless, it is able to have an honest and thorough debate on the crimes committed by totalitarian regimes in the 20th century.

TOTALITARIAN MEMORY OF EUROPE

- After World War Two, Central and Eastern European nations:
 - Were isolated from the common space of values and justice of the rest of Europe.
 - Did not participate in the process of restoration of historical justice.
 - Were not able to contribute to Europe's historical, legal, and political debates.

TOTALITARIAN MEMORY OF EUROPE

- After World War Two, Central and Eastern European and Western European nations had different historical experiences:
 - The dominant historical experience of Western Europe was Nazism.
 - Western Europe actively exposed and condemned the crimes of the Nazis; did factual research and educated the public.
 - Central and Eastern European countries experienced both Communism and Nazism.
 - Since the existing history had been falsified, only after the fall of the Iron Curtain research in the crimes of communism was possible.
 - The exposure and condemnation of communist crimes is overly passive and too little is done to educate the public in Europe.

TOTALITARIAN MEMORY OF EUROPE

- Without condemning the crimes of totalitarian communism, politically and legally, a biased understanding of Europe's common history and a selective use of historical facts will continue.
 - Erecting monuments to Lenin and Mao in Montpellier, France.
 - Stalin monuments reconstructed in Akura, Zemo Alvani and Gori, Georgia, after the 01.10.2012 elections.
 - Public rehabilitation of Stalin in Russia:
 - Buses in Russian cities with Stalin's portrait and Volgograd officially renamed “the hero city Stalingrad” six times a year to mark the WWII battle
 - Petition to fully rehabilitate Stalin with 50 thousand signatures
 - Populations opinion of Stalin as having a “negative role” falls from 60% (1998) to 22% (2012).
 - Attempts by political factions in Eastern Europe to label secret or restrict access to related archives.

ACTION FOR RECONCILIATION: EUROPE

- Europe must recognize all historical aspects of modern Europe, therefore it is necessary to:
 - Formulate a common approach to Nazism and totalitarian communism,
 - Clearly define the attitude towards the crimes of totalitarian communism,
 - Ensure the continuity of the comprehensive reassessment of political, historical, and legal aspects of the crimes of totalitarian communism,
 - Ensure a clear international legal framework for free access to archives (security services, secret police, intelligence agencies), which contain information about totalitarian crimes.

ACTION FOR RECONCILIATION: MEMBER STATES

- Based on the recognition of truth and remembrance, in order to lay the foundations for reconciliation, Member States should:
 - Ensure equal treatment and non-discrimination principles for the victims of all totalitarian regimes,
 - Honour the memory of the victims,
 - Remember those who actively opposed totalitarian rule,
 - Condemn the crimes of totalitarian regimes, politically and legally,
 - Declare August 23rd as European Day of Remembrance for the Victims of Stalinism and Nazism,
 - Condemn the perpetrators of these crimes,
 - Bring the perpetrators of these crimes to justice.

ACTION FOR RECONCILIATION: EU INSTITUTIONS

The European Commission, European Parliament and European Council should strengthen the existing relevant EU financial instruments in order to:

- Promote the studies and the professional historical research of totalitarian history,
- Preserve the memory of the victims of totalitarian regimes,
- Support institutions and non-governmental organizations actively engaged in researching and collecting documents on crimes committed during the Stalinist period,
- Create a European-wide network of institutes researching totalitarianisms,
- Support national institutes specializing in the study of their nations experience with totalitarianisms,
- Support European and national projects related to research and education,
- Support cultural and educational initiatives.

ACTION FOR RECONCILIATION:

- European Council, European Parliament, European Commission, and Member States should promote:
 - A comprehensive assessment of European history,
 - Preparation of national reports on the crimes of totalitarianisms,
 - Research and appropriate preservation of historical memory,
 - The strengthening of the teaching of European history,
 - Education of the public on the crimes of totalitarian regimes,
 - The Establishment of a Platform of European Memory and Conscience,
 - Networking and cooperation among national research institutes specialising in totalitarianisms,
 - The creation of a pan-European centre for the documentation of totalitarianism,
 - The construction of a memorial for the victims of all totalitarian regimes in Brussels,
 - The establishment, under the auspices of the EU, a permanent governmental Forum (Conference) on the crimes of totalitarian regimes.

ACTION FOR RECONCILIATION: DOCUMENTS

- Councils framework decision 2008/913/JHA on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law (28.11.2008.)
- Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly resolution Nr. 1481 on the Need for international condemnation of crimes of totalitarian communist regimes (25.01.2006.)
- European Parliaments declaration on the proclamation of 23 August as European Day of Remembrance for Victims of Stalinism and Nazism (23.09.2008.)
- European Parliament resolution on the sixtieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War in Europe on 8 May 1945 (12.05.2005)
- European Parliament resolution of 23 October 2008 on the commemoration of the Holodomor, the Ukraine artificial famine (1932-1933) (23.10.2008.)
- European Parliament resolution on Srebrenica (15.01.2009.)
- European Parliament resolution Nr.P6_TA(2009)0213 on European conscience and totalitarianism (02.04.2009.)
- European Commission report “The memory of the crimes committed by totalitarian regimes in Europe” (22.12.2010.)
- Council conclusions “On the memory of the crimes committed by the totalitarian regimes in Europe” (8.06.2011.)

Councils framework decision on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law (28.11.2008)

- Calls on the Commission to examine and to report to the Council [...] whether an additional instrument is needed, to cover publicly condoning, denying or grossly trivializing crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes directed against a group of persons defined by other criteria than race, colour, religion, descent or national or ethnic origin such as social status or political convictions.”

Council of Europe's resolution On the need for international condemnation of crimes of totalitarian communist regimes (25.01.2006)

- Totalitarian communist regimes were characterized by "massive violations of human rights."
- The crimes were justified in the name of the class struggle theory and the principle of dictatorships of the proletariat.
- "The authors of these crimes have not been brought to trial by the international community, as was the case with the horrible crimes committed by National Socialism (Nazism)."
- "Public awareness of crimes committed by totalitarian communist regimes is very poor."
- Awareness is important in order to avoid such events from repeating themselves. Moral assessment and condemnation should play a large role in education of younger generations.
- Victims and relatives deserve sympathy, understanding, and recognition.
- National level debates and condemnations cannot give dispensation to the international community from taking a clear stance. "It has a moral obligation to do so without any further delay."
- Calls on all post communist states to clearly distance themselves from the crimes committed by the totalitarian communist regimes and to condemn them without ambiguity.
- A clear position from the international community will pave the way to further reconciliation and encourage historians to continue their research.

EP declaration on the proclamation of 23 August as European Day of Remembrance for Victims of Stalinism and Nazism (23.09.2008)

- The Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of 23 August 1939, between the Soviet Union and Germany, divided Europe into two spheres of interest by means of secret additional protocols
- The mass deportations, murders and enslavements committed in the context of the acts of aggression by Stalinism and Nazism fall into the category of war crimes and crimes against humanity,
- Under international law, statutory limitations do not apply to war crimes and crimes against humanity,
- The influence and significance of the Soviet order and occupation on and for citizens of the post-Communist States are little known in Europe,
- Article 3 of Decision No 1904/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council established the programme 'Europe for Citizens' to promote active European citizenship calls for support for the action 'Active European Remembrance', intended to prevent any repetition of the crimes of Nazism and Stalinism,
- The EP proposes that 23 August be proclaimed European Day of Remembrance for Victims of Stalinism and Nazism, in order to preserve the memory of the victims of mass deportations and exterminations, and at the same time rooting democracy more firmly and reinforcing peace and stability in our continent;

EP resolution on the sixtieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War in Europe on 8 May 1945 (12.05.2005)

- Highlights the importance of keeping the memories of the past alive, because there cannot be reconciliation without truth and remembrance; emphasises at the same time that only a strong Europe can offer a means of overcoming the atrocities of the past.
- 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.
- Confirms its united stand against all totalitarian rule of whatever ideological persuasion.
- Declares that the process of European integration and the further development of the European Union as a model of peace are the result of a free decision by the people to determine their own destiny and commit themselves to a shared future.
- Declares that, under the Helsinki Agreements, no country has the right to decide on the destiny of another country.
- Calls on all countries to open their archives pertaining to World War II.

EP resolution of 23 October 2008 on the commemoration of the Holodomor, the Ukraine artificial famine (1932-1933) (23.10.2008)

- Recognises the Holodomor (the artificial famine of 1932-1933 in Ukraine) as an appalling crime against the Ukrainian people, and against humanity;
- Strongly condemns these acts, directed against the Ukrainian peasantry, and marked by mass annihilation and violations of human rights and freedoms;
- Expresses its sympathy with the Ukrainian people, who suffered in this tragedy, and pays its respects to those who died as a consequence of the artificial famine of 1932-1933;
- Calls on the countries which emerged following the break-up of the Soviet Union to open up their archives on the Holodomor in Ukraine of 1932-1933 to comprehensive scrutiny so that all the causes and consequences can be revealed and fully investigated;

EP resolution on Srebrenica (15.01.2009)

- Commemorates and honours all the victims of the atrocities during the wars in the former Yugoslavia; recognises that this continuing pain is aggravated by the failure to bring those responsible for these acts to justice.
- Calls on the Council and the Commission to commemorate appropriately the anniversary of the Srebrenica-Potočari act of genocide by supporting Parliament's recognition of 11 July as the day of commemoration of the Srebrenica genocide all over the EU.
- Calls for further efforts to bring the remaining fugitives to justice.
- Stresses the importance of reconciliation as part of the European integration process; urges all countries to make further efforts to come to terms with a difficult and troubled past.

EP resolution on European conscience and totalitarianism (02.04.2009)

- Expresses respect for all victims of totalitarian and undemocratic regimes and pays tribute to those who fought against oppression;
- 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;
- Underlines the importance of keeping the memories of the past alive, because there can be no reconciliation without truth and remembrance; reconfirms its united stand against all totalitarian rule from whatever ideological background;
- Recalls that the most recent crimes against humanity and acts of genocide in Europe were still taking place in July 1995 and that constant vigilance is needed to fight undemocratic, xenophobic, authoritarian and totalitarian ideas and tendencies;
- Underlines that, in order to strengthen European awareness of crimes committed by totalitarian and undemocratic regimes, documentation of, and accounts testifying to, Europe's troubled past must be supported, as there can be no reconciliation without remembrance;
- Regrets that, 20 years after the collapse of the Communist dictatorships 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, although steps must be taken to ensure that this process is not abused for political purposes;
- Condemns strongly and unequivocally all crimes against humanity and the massive human rights violations committed by all totalitarian and authoritarian regimes; extends to the victims of these crimes and their family members its sympathy, understanding and recognition of their suffering;
- 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;
- Calls on the Commission and the Member States to make further efforts to strengthen the teaching of European history and to underline the historic achievement of European integration and the stark contrast between the tragic past and the peaceful and democratic social order in today's European Union;
- Believes that appropriate preservation of historical memory, a comprehensive reassessment of European history and Europe-wide recognition of all historical aspects of modern Europe will strengthen European integration;
- Calls in this connection on the Council and the Commission to support and defend the activities of non-governmental organisations, such as Memorial in the Russian Federation, that are actively engaged in researching and collecting documents related to the crimes committed during the Stalinist period;
- Reiterates its consistent support for strengthened international justice;
- Calls for the establishment of a Platform of European Memory and Conscience to provide support for networking and cooperation among national research institutes specialising in the subject of totalitarian history, and for the creation of a pan-European documentation centre/memorial for the victims of all totalitarian regimes;
- Calls for a strengthening of the existing relevant financial instruments with a view to providing support for professional historical research on the issues outlined above;
- Calls for the proclamation of 23 August as a Europe-wide Day of Remembrance for the victims of all totalitarian and authoritarian regimes, to be commemorated with dignity and impartiality;
- Is convinced that the ultimate goal of disclosure and assessment of the crimes committed by the Communist totalitarian regimes is reconciliation, which can be achieved by admitting responsibility, asking for forgiveness and fostering moral renewal;
- 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.

EC report The memory of the crimes committed by totalitarian regimes in Europe (22.12.2010)

- The "Europe for Citizens" programme of which Action 4, "Active European Remembrance", "is designed to keep alive the memory of the victims of Nazism and Stalinism and to improve the knowledge about what took place in the camps and other places of mass extermination of civilians."
- Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development. "The Work Programme for 2010 under theme 8, "Socioeconomic sciences and humanities" includes a specific call for proposals on the topic: "Democracy and the shadows of totalitarianism and populism: the European experience"
- MEDIA 2007 program can support films and other audiovisual works on the subject.
- The Information and Communication Technologies Support Programme (ICT-PSP) can be used to digitalize documents and other materials.
- The EU Lifelong Learning programme "supports transnational projects promoting active citizenship education towards tolerance values, better knowledge of European history and cultural heritage and democratic behaviour."

Council conclusions On the memory of the crimes committed by the totalitarian regimes in Europe (08.06.2011)

- The European Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights. These values are common to the MS and should be a constant inspiration and source of encouragement to all MS seeking to come to terms with the sufferings of their past.
- Highlights the value of the EU's role in facilitating, sharing and promoting the collective memory of these crimes;
- Highlights the Europe-wide Day of Remembrance of the victims of the totalitarian regimes (23 August) and invites MS to consider how to commemorate it , in the light of their own history and specificities.
- Encourages the MS and the Commission to raise or support initiatives aiming at informing and educating the public about Europe's totalitarian past, as well as to conduct research projects, including those with an international dimension.
- Welcomes the Commission's intentions to use EU financial and other programmes, to assist interested parties to support and promote such initiatives and projects as well as to examine how those activities could be sufficiently financed in the future.
- Invites the Commission to pay attention to the questions of the participation of smaller organisations to EU financial programmes, including schools and higher education institutions, as well as to examine how to foster participation of the beneficiaries from the Eastern partnership countries and Russia in common initiatives and projects financed by these programmes.
- Encourages the Commission to further examine and promote possibilities for research projects or grants in the field of totalitarian regimes for researches from the EU MS as well as other European countries that have suffered from the crimes of totalitarian regimes. This may include EUROBAROMETER polls on what EU citizens know about European totalitarian regimes.
- Invites all interested parties to make full use of existing EU programmes to establish a Platform of European Memory and Conscience to provide support for current and future networking and cooperation among national research institutes specializing in the subject of totalitarian history.
- Invites the Commission to reflect and inform regularly the MS and interested parties on cultural, educational, memorial and other activities and concrete steps to raise awareness of the crimes committed by totalitarian regimes and to further promote the memory.
- Takes note of the Commission's intentions, as indicated in the Report to the European Parliament and to the Council, to keep under review the conditions for an additional legal instrument.

Reconciliation of European Histories

- Founded on May 6th 2010
- Informal group of 41 Members of the European Parliament
- The group works to converge the views of Europe as a whole in regards to the history of the 20th century.
- www.eureconciliation.eu

Reconciliation of European Histories

- Main activities so far by the group:
 - “What do Young European Know about Totalitarianisms?”
 - “The Hearing on the Commission’s report: The Memory of the Crimes Committed by Totalitarian Regimes in Europe”
 - “Life after the Soviet Union”
 - “Legal Settlement of Communist Crimes”
 - Active support for the founding of the Platform of European Memory and Conscience
 - Close work with EUROCLIO, the European Association of History Educators
 - Presentation of documentary films, exhibitions and related literature in the EP
 - Active political stance to prevent the misuse of facts related to Totalitarianisms (statements, letters, meetings, etc.)
 - Participation in multiple conferences all over Europe.
- To find related resources or to learn more about the group please see our website: www.eureconciliation.eu