Resolution on the importance of European remembrance for the future of Europe

2019/2819(RSP) - 19/09/2019 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 535 votes to 66, with 52 abstentions, a resolution on the importance of European remembrance for the future of Europe.

The resolution was tabled by the EPP, S&D, Renew, Greens/EFA and ECR groups.

This year marks the 80th anniversary of the outbreak of the Second World War, which led to unprecedented levels of human suffering and the occupation of countries in Europe for many decades to come.

The resolution stressed 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.

In its resolution, Parliament condemned all manifestations and propagation of totalitarian ideologies, such as Nazism and Stalinism, in the EU as well as historical revisionism and the glorification of Nazi collaborators in some EU Member States. It expressed deep concern about the increasing acceptance of radical ideologies and the reversion to fascism, racism, xenophobia and other forms of intolerance in the European Union.

Parliament called on the Member States to:

- make a clear and principled assessment of the crimes and acts of aggression perpetrated by the totalitarian communist regimes and the Nazi regime;

- commemorate 23 August as the European Day of Remembrance for the victims of totalitarian regimes at both EU and national level;

- raise the younger generation's awareness of these issues by including the history and analysis of the consequences of totalitarian regimes in the curricula and textbooks of all schools in the EU;

- condemn and counteract all forms of Holocaust denial, including the trivialisation and minimisation of the crimes perpetrated by the Nazis and their collaborators, and to prevent trivialisation in political and media discourse.

Overall, the EU called for:

- a common culture of remembrance that rejects the crimes of fascist, Stalinist, and other totalitarian and authoritarian regimes of the past as a way of fostering resilience against modern threats to democracy, particularly among the younger generation;

- the 25 May (the anniversary of the execution of the Auschwitz hero Rotamaster Witold Pilecki) to be established as International Day of Heroes of the Fight against Totalitarianism;

- the allocation of adequate financial resources under the ‘Europe for Citizens’ programme to support commemoration and remembrance of the victims of totalitarianism, as set out in Parliament’s position on the 2021-2027 Rights and Values Programme.

Lastly, Parliament maintained 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. It is therefore called on to come to terms with its tragic past.