

STATEMENT

In the Plenary Session of 7 May, the Saeima of the Republic of Latvia

commemorating the 75th anniversary of the end of the Second World War as a result of the capitulation of Nazi Germany on 8 May 1945;

honouring the war victims lost on all sides in this shared European tragedy that caused unprecedented human suffering;

condemning all war crimes and crimes against humanity, especially the crime of the Holocaust instigated by the Nazis;

paying honour and respect to everyone who fought against tyranny and fell victim to it;

referring to the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia, the Declaration "On the occupation of Latvia" adopted by the Saeima on 22 August 1996, the Declaration "On condemnation of the totalitarian communist occupation regime implemented in Latvia by the USSR" adopted by the Saeima on 12 May 2005, and the Resolution "On the 80th anniversary of the occupation of the Republic of Latvia and the unacceptability of the distortion of the history of the Second World War" adopted by the Saeima on 16 January 2020;

emphasising that the Second World War was the most devastating conflict in the history of Europe, caused by the Treaty of Non-Aggression of 23 August 1939 between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union, also known as the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, and its secret protocol, which divided Europe into spheres of influence of the two totalitarian regimes;

reiterating that the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact marked a period of cooperation between Nazi Germany and the USSR lasting 22 months, and that the two aggressors destroyed the national sovereignty of 12 European states and deprived two European states of large territories during this period;

asserting that the collapse of the Nazi regime and the end of the Second World War divided Europe into two parts with different destinies: the western part was freed of totalitarianism completely, whereas the eastern part remained under sustained control of the communist regime with a particularly severe impact on the Baltic States, which were occupied and annexed by the Soviet Union;

reiterating that Latvia lost one third of its citizens during the Second World War, the residents of Latvia were illegally conscripted into the armed forces of the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany, and many people who fought for the freedom of Latvia, including members of the national resistance movement, were killed or imprisoned;

emphasising that the crimes committed by the Nazi regime were investigated at the Nuremberg International Military Tribunal and other related trials, nevertheless, to this day, crimes committed by the totalitarian communistic regime such as genocide, mass murder, detention, confinement in prisons and hard labour camps, mass deportations, confiscations of property, prohibition of the freedom of speech, movement, and thought, as well as many other crimes, have not been properly investigated and assessed on a global scale;

expressing regret that the Russian Federation, as the legal successor of the Soviet Union, still refuses to recognise and acknowledge the Soviet Union's aggression against the Baltic States and continues to justify their occupation and illegal annexation;

voicing concern about the attempts by the Russian Federation to revise the history of the Second World War to serve its own interests, rejecting critical examination of the role of the Soviet Union and implementing an aggressive disinformation campaign that hinders a common perspective of the international community on the course and outcomes of the Second World War;

referring to the European Parliament resolution of 19 September 2019 on the importance of European remembrance for the future of Europe, which states that "there can be no reconciliation without remembrance";

emphasises that Europe cannot be united as long as its collective historical memory remains divided;

maintains that it is necessary to promote a comprehensive view of history in order to prevent the resurgence of totalitarian regimes; to protect the sovereignty and independence of all European countries; to strengthen the unity of Europe and those who are living in Europe; to promote a common understanding of the crimes committed by the totalitarian Nazi and communist regimes;

calls for respect for each individual and family in Europe regarding their experience of the War, condemning the Nazi and communist regimes and all crimes committed by these regimes in a consistent and balanced manner. Only by remembering the injustices of totalitarianism and honouring the victims of the Second World War is it possible to break free from such legacies of the past, thus strengthening democracy, peace, and stability in Europe and the entire world;

recommends that the Presidium of the Saeima, all parliamentary groups and unaffiliated Members of Parliament consistently adhere to the doctrine of legal continuity of the Republic of Latvia; condemn totalitarian regimes and crimes committed by these regimes; respect the historical experience and heritage of the people of Latvia; and confront inclinations to distort and warp history with regard to the interpretation of events of the Second World War.

Speaker of the Saeima

(signature)

I. Mūrniece

Riga, 7 May 2020