Parliamentary Assembly
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
75
1949 - 2024
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Resolution 2575 (2024)[1]

Commemorating the 90th anniversary of the Holodomor – Ukraine once again faces the threat of genocide

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Parliamentary Assembly stresses that the present war of aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine must be seen in the context of an earlier attempt to wipe out Ukrainian nationhood, namely the Holodomor, whose 90th anniversary was commemorated in November 2023:

1.1. the Holodomor, genocide by artificial famine, resulted in the deaths of millions of Ukrainians, shielded from the view of foreign observers located in urban areas;

1.2. hitherto secret documents, published after the "Orange Revolution", show that the famine was the intended result of the policies imposed by the Soviet regime. The artificial famine targeted mostly Ukrainians within the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic as well as Ukrainians living in other regions of the Soviet Union; only ethnic Kazakhs, who may well have been targeted by the Kremlin for similar reasons, suffered comparable loss of life;

1.3. according to the official Russian narrative, the famine was the unintended result of erroneous economic policies pursued by Joseph Stalin. However, documents show there was no shortage of grain until the authorities confiscated even the seed grain that would have ensured the following year's harvest. Documents also show that the confiscation of food targeted not only grain, but also all foodstuffs found in the houses of Ukrainian farmers in brutal searches carried out by officials, even when family members were already dead or dying on the floor;

1.4. the deadliness of the artificial famine was heightened by the fact that NKVD (People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs) troops surrounded the stricken villages and regions, preventing the inhabitants from escaping and blocking any foodstuffs from entering the target regions;

1.5. the Soviet Union also refused international aid offered by several countries to alleviate the suffering in Ukraine and instead exported confiscated Ukrainian grain abroad;

1.6. the artificial famine was preceded by a campaign of show trials, enforced disappearances and other forms of repression against the Ukrainian intellectual elites – the cultural backbone of Ukrainian nationhood. This campaign of terror and repression targeting the Ukrainian "intelligentsia" took place years before Stalin's purges and terror campaign in the late 1930s, which also engulfed numerous ethnic Russians and members of other Soviet nationalities;

1.7. these special measures, in particular the confiscation of all foodstuffs in house-to-house searches and the NKVD blockades as well as the repression targeting the intellectual elite were applied only in Ukraine and other regions chiefly populated by Ukrainians, not in other parts of the Soviet Union suffering from famine;

1.8. the Assembly therefore determines that the systematic destruction of first the political and cultural leaders, who served as the cultural backbone of the Ukrainian nation, and then millions of ordinary Ukrainians, was deliberately intended as a genocide. Genocide, as defined in the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide ("the Genocide Convention"),

1. *Assembly debate* on 3 October 2024 (30th sitting) (see Doc. 16028, report of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, rapporteur: Mr Knut Abraham). *Text adopted by the Assembly* on 3 October 2024 (30th sitting).

does not require the physical elimination of all members of the target group. It is sufficient that living conditions are made so difficult that the existence of the group as such, in whole or in part, is put in jeopardy;

1.9. until the fall of the Soviet Union, Ukrainians continued to suffer from the leaden silence about the Holodomor enforced by the Soviet regime. After Ukraine became independent, and in particular since the "Orange Revolution", the Ukrainian people have enjoyed a revival of their language, culture and political consciousness, with unquestionable support for human rights and the rule of law. Such resilience in the face of genocide and historic and present brutal repression deserves the greatest admiration.

2. The Assembly expresses its deep concern in relation to the genocidal threat that Ukraine is facing once again in the ongoing full-scale war of aggression by the Russian Federation, noting that:

2.1. Russian propaganda, including statements at the highest level, deny the Ukrainian people's very right to exist as an independent nation;

2.2. the methods used by the Russian military in the war against Ukraine and the actions of the illegal Russian authorities in the temporarily occupied Ukrainian territories show that these statements are not empty threats;

2.3. the massacres of Bucha and Irpin and those discovered in other towns liberated from Russian occupation and the use of powerful explosives and even thermobaric and cluster munitions in heavily populated areas constitute war crimes and, given their widespread, systematic nature, crimes against humanity. The same is true for the siege and destruction of the city of Mariupol, the heavy shelling of Kharkiv, Odessa and other Ukrainian cities and towns, even ones far from the frontline, and the systematic targeting and destruction of vital civilian infrastructures such as hospitals, markets, power stations, district heating, food storage and processing facilities;

2.4. the systematic tracking down, "filtering out" and ill-treatment in makeshift torture chambers of patriotic Ukrainian political and cultural elites (local officials, community leaders, etc.) by the illegal occupation authorities, the forcible incorporation of men living in the temporarily occupied areas of Ukraine into the Russian military and the systematic destruction of the spiritual legacy and cultural heritage of the Ukrainian people, such as churches, museums, publishing houses and monuments, demonstrate the intention of the Russian occupiers to destroy Ukrainian nationhood wherever they can;

2.5. the forcible transfer and deportation of tens of thousands of Ukrainian children to temporarily occupied Ukrainian territories or faraway regions of the Russian Federation and Belarus is a war crime, a crime against humanity, and may well amount to an element of genocide. The Assembly welcomes the arrest warrants by the International Criminal Court (ICC) against Vladimir Putin and the Russian Commissioner for Children's Rights, Maria Lvova-Belova;

2.6. just as in the 1930s, the Russian Federation is once again using food as a weapon, not only against Ukraine but also to exacerbate global food insecurity. By blockading and threatening ships in the Black Sea, the Russian Federation has weaponised trade and disrupted grain shipments to Africa and other regions. Ukrainian farmers face severe shortages of resources, while Russian forces have deliberately bombed farmland, mined fields and destroyed vital agricultural infrastructure. The Kakhovka Dam disaster alone caused US$387.71 million in damage, cutting off irrigation to nearly 600 000 hectares of farmland.

3. The Assembly therefore:

3.1. recognises the Holodomor of 1932-33 in Ukraine as a genocide against the Ukrainian people and invites all national parliaments who have not yet done so to do the same;

3.2. commends Ukraine for the thorough investigations carried out by the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) and the Prosecutor General's Office since 2009. These judicial investigations exposed the horrific scale of the crime and the brutal methods used, and identified its instigators and perpetrators, in particular Joseph Stalin. Finally, they established their motive – to destroy the Ukrainian people as a national group, in order to ensure unfettered Russian domination of the Soviet Union;

3.3. calls on all governments to do their utmost to help the people of Ukraine to fight off the ongoing genocidal assault against their nation and to hold to account the perpetrators of the crimes against humanity and war crimes committed in the context of the Russian war of aggression;

3.4. recalls that all contracting parties to the Genocide Convention, including all member States of the Council of Europe, have undertaken a legal duty to prevent and punish any acts of genocide and may call upon the competent organs of the United Nations to take appropriate action;

3.5. calls on all member and observer States of the Council of Europe as well as States whose parliaments enjoy partner for democracy status with the Assembly to make use of all the instruments at their disposal, including under the Genocide Convention, to prevent any further acts of genocide against the Ukrainian people as a national group, including the attempt to commit genocide and the direct and public incitement to genocide, and to ensure that the perpetrators of earlier such acts are punished;

3.6. invites the prosecutor of the ICC to consider examining the reported allegations of genocide against the Ukrainian people, generally in respect of the situation in Ukraine, including in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine, and more specifically regarding the transfer of Ukrainian children.