Resolution 679 (1978)[1]

Situation of the Jewish community in the Soviet Union

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Recalling its Resolution 412 (1969) and its Recommendations 632 (1971), 722 (1974) and 778 (1976), on the situation of the Jewish community in the Soviet Union ;

2. Further recalling its Resolution 672 (1978) on implementation of the Final Act of CSCE, in which it, inter alia, reiterated its conviction that the progressive increase in the number of persons permitted to emigrate or to travel outside their own countries for family, personal or professional reasons is a prerequisite for the development of détente ;

3. Noting that the Soviet Union has ratified the UN Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, whose Article 27 provides that "in those countries in which ethnic, religious and language minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practice their own religion, or to use their own language" ;

4. Convinced that respect for Jewish cultural and religious traditions on the part of the Soviet authorities would make it easier for Jews to identify with Soviet society ;

5. Welcoming the tendency for the monthly figures for Jewish emigration to increase in the two-and-a-half years separating the Helsinki and Belgrade Conferences ;

6. Deeply disturbed, however, at the harshness of the sentences passed during the dark summer of 1978 on Anatoly Shcharansky and others active in the Jewish emigration movement and in the groups set up to monitor the implementation of the Helsinki Final Act in the Soviet Union ;

7. Convinced that, irrespective of the charges, these sentences, together with harassment and an official anti-Zionist campaign with clear anti-semitic overtones, are directed primarily against this movement which seeks no more than to exercise an elementary human right,

8. Calls upon its members to exert pressure on governments, parliaments and international organisations with a view to securing the release of those imprisoned for seeking to emigrate, and the effective recognition by the Soviet authorities of the right to leave the country ;

9. Resolves to keep the situation under close review, so as to ensure that parliamentary and public opinion remain vigilant on this issue during the period preceding the second CSCE review conference due to be held in Madrid in 1980.

1. Assembly debate on 2 October 1978 (14th Sitting) (see Doc. 4209, report of the Committee on European Non-member Countries). Text adopted by the Assembly on 2 October 1978 (14th Sitting).