

A call to study and assess communist crimes against humanity and violations of human rights.

Communism, a system entailing massive crimes against humanity and wide-scale violations of human rights has not yet received the full assessment of its extent and its lingering effect on Europe to this day. Historians have calculated that 100 million human beings have perished under communist regimes. It dominated the lives and destinies of 120 million current citizens of the European Union. Few, if any, of those responsible have been brought to justice. Crimes like the Katyn killing of Polish officers, mass deportations from the Baltic states, the creation and operation of the Gulag or the man-made famine in Ukraine, the imprisonment of people who today are leading citizens of Europe, the denial of fundamental rights of freedom, of expression, speech, movement and many others have been neither properly investigated nor internationally assessed.

The people of Europe have been freed from Communist domination. It is the task of Europe to investigate and assess Communist crimes on its own territory. It is our responsibility to those who perished or whose lives were destroyed. It is our responsibility to the children of the victims who today, as citizens of Europe see their plight treated as a secondary „historical“ issue, better left untouched.

We propose to create an international commission to investigate communist crimes in Europe. We call upon European states to come together to create such an institution, appointing internationally recognized Europeans – respected scholars, senior politicians and others – to ensure that such an undertaking enjoys the trust and respect that is the sine qua non of any commission tasked to study such a difficult issue. The aim of such a commission should not be to condemn or pass judgement on individuals, for it would not be a court; the aim should be to illuminate what was done to a quarter of the citizens of Europe, to pass judgment on the system, whose long-lasting effects are with us even today.

We shall call upon the Governments of Europe to negotiate the legal instrument for the creation of such a commission and its working procedures. It is our hope that the countries of Europe, those countries who have suffered, as well as those who managed to remain democratic, will participate in this important endeavor to search for moral right and justice. Only in this way can

we heal the remaining scars that even today divide us.