



**Resolution 1723 (2010)<sup>1</sup>**

Final version

## Commemorating the victims of the Great Famine (Holodomor) in the former USSR

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Parliamentary Assembly refers to [Resolution 1481 \(2006\)](#) on the need for international condemnation of crimes of totalitarian communist regimes, in which it strongly condemned the massive human rights violations committed by the totalitarian communist regimes and expressed sympathy, understanding and recognition towards the victims of these crimes. It also stated that awareness of history is one of the preconditions for avoiding similar crimes in the future.
2. The totalitarian Stalinist regime in the former Soviet Union led to horrifying human rights violations which deprived millions of people of their right to life.
3. One of the most tragic pages in the history of the peoples of the former Soviet Union was the mass famine in grain-growing areas of the country which started in the late 1920s and culminated in 1932-33.
4. Millions of innocent people in Belarus, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Russia and Ukraine, which were parts of the Soviet Union, lost their lives as a result of mass starvation caused by the cruel and deliberate actions and policies of the Soviet regime.
5. In Ukraine, which suffered the most, the peasantry was particularly hit by the Great Famine and millions of individual farmers and members of their families died of hunger following forced “collectivisation”, a ban on departures from the affected areas and confiscation of grain and other food. These tragic events are referred to as *Holodomor* (politically-motivated famine) and are recognised by Ukrainian law as an act of genocide against Ukrainians.
6. In Kazakhstan, too, millions fell victim to the mass famine, and the ratio of the dead to the whole population is believed to be the highest among all peoples of the former Soviet Union. Traditionally nomads, the cattle-raising Kazakhs were forced to settle down and were deprived of livestock. The Great Famine is remembered as the greatest tragedy of the Kazakh people.
7. In the grain-producing areas of Russia (the Middle and Lower Volga, the North Caucasus, the Central Black Soil region, the Southern Urals, Western Siberia and some other regions), the famine caused by “collectivisation” and dispossession of individual farmers took millions of lives in rural and urban areas. In absolute figures, it is estimated that the population of Russia had the heaviest death toll as a result of the Soviet agricultural policies.
8. Hundreds of thousands of farmers also died in Belarus and the Republic of Moldova.
9. While these events may have had particularities in various regions, the results were the same everywhere: millions of human lives were mercilessly sacrificed to the fulfilment of the policies and plans of the Stalinist regime.

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1. *Assembly debate* on 28 April 2010 (15th Sitting) (see [Doc. 12173](#), report of the Political Affairs Committee, rapporteur: Mr Çavuşoğlu; and [Doc. 12181](#), opinion of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, rapporteur: Mr Rowen). *Text adopted by the Assembly* on 28 April 2010 (15th Sitting).



10. The Assembly honours the memory of all those who perished in this unprecedented human disaster, and recognises them as victims of a cruel crime of the Soviet regime against its own people.
11. It strongly condemns the cruel policies pursued by the Stalinist regime, which resulted in the death of millions of innocent people, as a crime against humanity. It resolutely rejects any attempts to justify these deadly policies, by whatever purposes, and recalls that the right to life is non-derogable.
12. It welcomes the efforts aimed at revealing the historical truth about, and at raising the public awareness of, these tragic events of the past. Such efforts should seek to unite, not divide peoples.
13. The Assembly welcomes the important work already done in Belarus, Kazakhstan, the Republic of Moldova, Russia and in particular in Ukraine in order to ease access to archives, and calls on the competent authorities of these countries to open up all their archives and facilitate access thereto to all researchers, including from other states.
14. It further calls on other Council of Europe member states to make their national archives open and accessible.
15. The Assembly calls on historians of all countries of the former Soviet Union which suffered during the Great Famine, as well as historians from other countries, to conduct joint independent research programmes in order to establish the full, unbiased and unpoliticised truth about this human tragedy, and to make it public.
16. It urges the politicians in all Council of Europe member states to abstain from any attempts to exert political influence on historians and prejudge the outcome of independent scientific research.
17. It welcomes the decision by the Ukrainian authorities to establish a national day of commemoration of the victims of the Great Famine (*Holodomor*) in Ukraine, and encourages the authorities of other countries which also suffered to do the same with regard to their own victims.
18. It furthermore encourages the authorities of all these countries to agree on joint activities aimed at commemorating the victims of the Great Famine, regardless of their nationality.