

УКРАЇНА



UKRAINE

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Statement

by H.E. Mr. Valeriy Kuchinsky

Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations

on agenda item 72 "Holocaust remembrance" of the 60th session of the United Nations General Assembly
(1 November 2005)

Mr. President,

While aligning fully with the statement by EU Presidency, I would like to make a few remarks on behalf of Ukraine.

Mr. President,

Holocaust is a permanent pain not only of the Jewish but of the world community as a whole. We remember the enormous suffering of those who perished in the death camps of Auschwitz, Buchenwald, Dachau and many other horrific places, where, in the name of an perverse inhuman ideology, millions of human beings were deliberately and cruelly exterminated. Jews and gypsies, men and women, children and the elderly, sons and daughters of different nations, including hundreds of thousands from Ukraine, became innocent victims of a ruthless political system that had caused immense losses to humanity.

The terrible image of the Holocaust was vivid in the minds of those who authored the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and of those who proclaimed the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.

Many thought that the horrors of the Second World War – the camps, the cruelty, the exterminations like Holocaust – could never happen again. And yet they have – in Cambodia, Srebrenica, Rwanda and most recently in Darfur.

In this respect we are deeply convinced that the history of the Holocaust must be learned and extensively explained so that a similar tragedy would never happen. The inter-ethnic conflicts which unfortunately take place in the world even today show that mankind lacks tolerance and that the lessons of Holocaust remain highly relevant and require continued attention of the entire membership of the United Nations.

Mr. President,

The history of Holocaust is widely studied and taught in Ukraine. The Government of Ukraine supports the initiative of the Jewish community on the creation of an Ukrainian Museum of Holocaust in Kyiv. We do hope that this project will be implemented soon.

The Orange Revolution has evoked dramatic transformations in the socio-political life of Ukraine. Those positive changes, I am sure, will have a favorable impact on the life of an over 100 thousand Jewish community which has made a worthy contribution to the strengthening of my country's independence.

On the Government's level we are doing our best to create adequate conditions for the revival and development of all minorities, residing in Ukraine. The minority legislation, put in place to ensure the inter-ethnic harmony and national diversity in Ukraine, fully corresponds to the highest international human rights standards.

Mr. President

As we are commemorating the victims of the Holocaust, Ukraine remembers the shattering damage which intolerance, violence and aggression caused to her in the past.

This year marks the 72nd anniversary of one of the most tragic pages in Ukraine's history – the Great Famine of 1932-33 (Holodomor – which means “death by famine”).

Deliberately targeted against the vital core of Ukrainian nation the cruel terror by hunger set up by the totalitarian Soviet regime led to the deaths of seven to ten million of innocent men, women and children.

The scourge of Holodomor still remains a heavy psychological trauma in the life of our people. After more than seven decades this catastrophe appears as one of the most shocking crimes ever experienced by the humankind.

And yet, Holodomor continues to belong to those national tragedies, which still await wide international recognition.

Two years ago a Joint Statement on the 70th anniversary of Holodomor, supported by over 60 delegations – one third of the UN membership – was issued as an official document of the General Assembly. In this declaration, for the first time in history of the United Nations, Holodomor has been officially recognized as a national tragedy of the Ukrainian people caused by the cruel actions and policies of the totalitarian regime. Representatives of the States from different parts of the world expressed sympathy to the victims of Holodomor and deplored the acts and policies that brought about mass starvation and death of millions of people.

Ukraine will continue to do its utmost to bring the truth about the Holodomor to the world at large. We think it is high time the international community recognize this crime as an act of genocide against the Ukrainian nation.

Mr. President

The memory of far and near instances of genocide, crimes against humanity or gross and flagrant violations of human rights should never fade away from our minds. In this regard, as an important step along this way, Ukraine has wholeheartedly supported and cosponsored the draft that we have before us for adoption.

In Ukraine, we have done and will continue to do everything to prevent the ideology of totalitarianism, dictatorship, xenophobia and anti-Semitism from taking root on our national soil.

My country is ready to assume its share of a collective responsibility to stop ongoing tragedies and prevent future crimes against humanity.

In this respect, as an important and promising outcome of the recent World Summit, the responsibility to protect against genocide should receive its practical implementation as well as the further development.

I thank you, Mr. President.