

Institute of National Remembrance

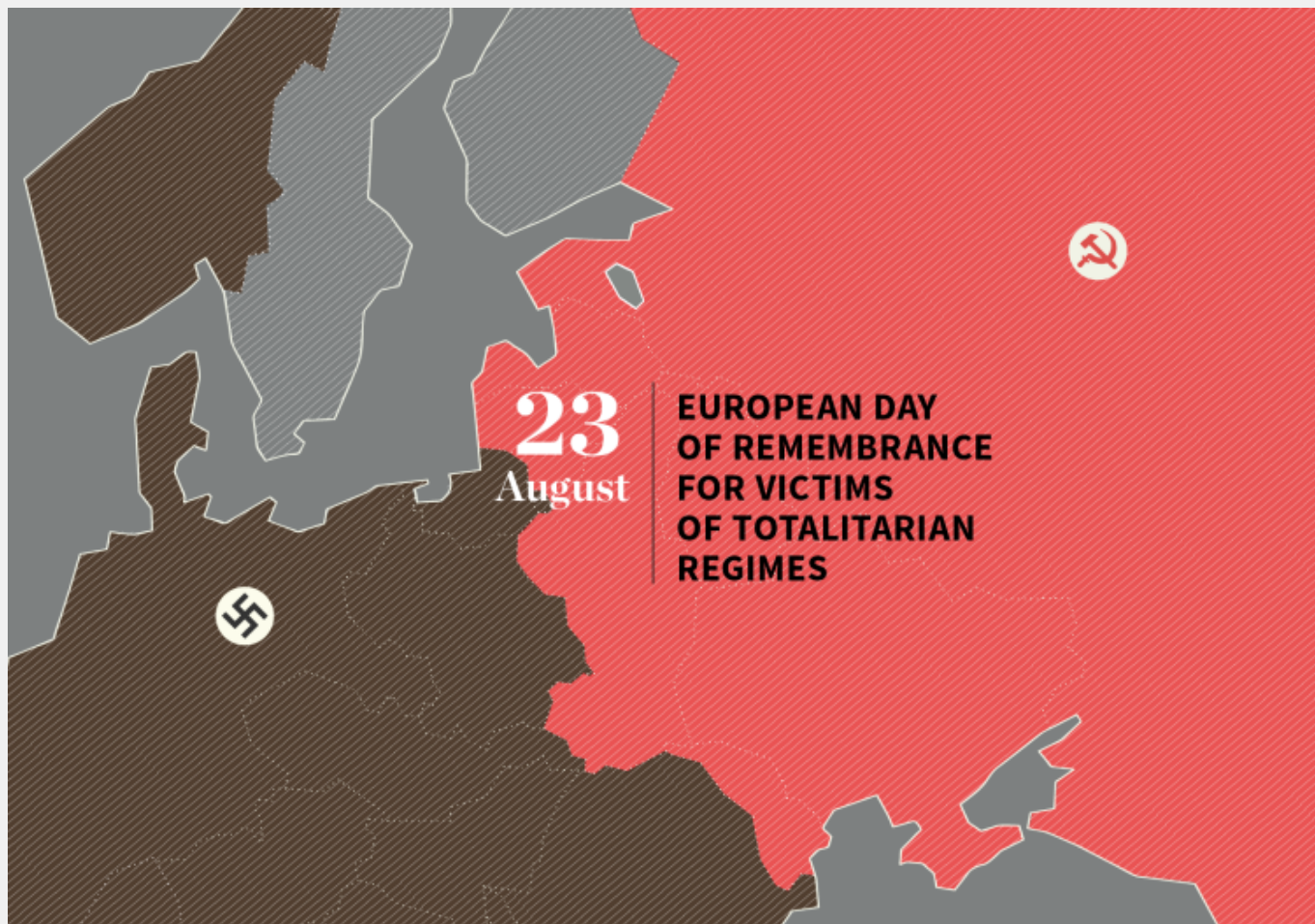
<https://ipn.gov.pl/en/news/2182,The-European-Day-of-Remembrance-for-the-Victims-of-Totalitarian-Regimes-23-Augus.html>

10.04.2024, 23:44

23.08.2019

The European Day of Remembrance for the Victims of Totalitarian Regimes, 23 August 2019

On 23 August 1939, Germany and the Soviet Union signed an agreement that opened the way to World War II along with all its consequences, including concentration camps, crematoria, gulags, and in its aftermath the long years of "Cold War" – which entailed further oppression for many societies of Central and Eastern Europe. The European Day of Remembrance for the Victims of Totalitarian Regimes is celebrated on the anniversary of the signing of the Molotov - Ribbentrop Pact.



The European Network Remembrance and Solidarity encourages

everyone to make a symbolic gesture of remembrance by sharing and wearing a special pin with the inscription “Remember. August 23”. This gesture is meant to commemorate the millions of victims of totalitarian regimes, primarily prisoners of concentration and extermination camps, labour camps, Soviet gulags and Stalinist torture chambers. The pins can be ordered via e-mail at the following address: office@enrs.eu.

The pins can also be found at the following locations:

- Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes – Czech Republic
- Estonian Institute of Historical Memory – Estonia
- Committee of National Remembrance (NEB) – Hungary
- Holocaust Memorial Center – Hungary
- The Museum of Occupations and Freedom Fights – Lithuania
- The National Museum of History of Moldova – Moldova
- Krzyżowa Foundation – Poland
- Zajezdnia History Centre – Poland
- Museum and Memorial Auschwitz-Birkenau – Poland
- European Solidarity Center – Poland
- Warsaw Rising Museum – Poland
- Museum of the Second World War – Poland
- Institute of National Remembrance (IPN) – Poland
- National History Museum of Romania – Romania
- Nation's Memory Institute (UPN) – Slovakia

The pins will be also distributed by the International Commission for

Evaluation of the Crimes of the Nazi and Soviet Occupation Regimes in Lithuania.

This year's official commemorations of the European Day of Remembrance for Victims of Totalitarian Regimes will be held in Warsaw from 23 to 24 August 2019.

On the occasion of the European Day of Remembrance for the Victims of Totalitarian Regimes, the European Network Remembrance and Solidarity has prepared a campaign entitled "Remember. August 23 ", which aims to bring to light the stories of people harmed by totalitarian regimes - communism or Nazism. It recalls the personal experiences of people who suffered violence and persecution on behalf of totalitarian systems in Europe, not as an anonymous collective, but individuals with their own distinctive stories and fates. This year's campaign sheds light on the story of Juliana Zarchi, a Lithuanian of German-Jewish descent whose life was marked by both the Nazi and Soviet regime. The following spots show the fate of Mala Zimetbaum, a Jew and Edek Galiński, a Pole who met in the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp as well as Peter Mansfeld - the youngest victim of repression after the Hungarian revolution of 1956.

The European Day of Remembrance for the Victims of Totalitarian Regimes was proclaimed by the European Parliament in 2008. The ceremonial celebrations of this day were organized for the first time in 2011 in Warsaw. The signatories of the "Warsaw Declaration" drew public attention to the necessity of cultivating the memory of totalitarian regimes and called on the European Union to collect

documentation and investigate matters related to these crimes. In subsequent years, celebrations with the participation of EU justice ministers were held in Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.

‘The purpose of the activity of the European Network Remembrance and Solidarity is to analyse, document and propagate the history of 20th century, a century of wars, totalitarian dictatorships and the suffering of civilian populations, the victims of wars, persecution, conquest, forced expulsions and nationalist, racist and ideologically motivated repression’. Its members are : Germany, Poland, Slovakia, Hungary and Romania. Austria, Latvia, Albania and Georgia have the status of observer countries.

For years, the Institute of National Remembrance has been carrying out its statutory mission of researching and documenting totalitarian crimes as well as commemorating their victims. The IPN is one of the 21 founding members of the Platform of European Memory and Conscience established in 2011, whose aim is to cooperate in spreading knowledge on totalitarian systems.

The most important tasks of the organization include the creation of a free and fully accessible documentation database on communist crimes, and work for education on totalitarianism in Europe. Every

year, the Platform of European Memory and Conscience awards its prize to those fighting today against totalitarianism, for the ideals of democracy, fundamental human rights and freedoms and the rule of law.

One of the Platform's projects in which the IPN has been actively participating is JUSTICE 2.0 - regarding the establishment of an international mechanism for the settlement of communist crimes. The Board of the Platform unanimously agreed to the Polish proposal to create an international tribunal that would deal with this problem. The IPN's proposal to create an international tribunal is an important contribution to the Platform's activity, becoming one of the organization's priorities.

Upon the initiative of the Platform of European Memory and Conscience and thanks to the materials sent by its representatives, IPN prosecutors in Krakow are investigating the killings of Polish citizens on the Czechoslovak-Austrian border in the years 1948-89. These victims were electrocuted while trying to cross the border. The communist authorities did not allow any warning signs informing about the threat in the event of attempts to escape. Persons who could be held criminally responsible for these crimes still live in the former Czechoslovakia.

Please find below a joint Statement by Estonia, Latvia,

Lithuania, Poland and Romania on the occasion of 80 years since the signing of Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact:

August 23 will mark 80 years since the signing of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact between the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany that sparked World War II and doomed half of Europe to decades of misery. The Pact contained the secret protocol which effectively carved up Eastern Europe into spheres of influence.

This is why on this day proclaimed by the European Parliament as a European Day of Remembrance for Victims of Totalitarian Regimes we remember all those whose deaths and broken lives were a consequence of the crimes perpetrated under the ideology of Nazism and Stalinism.

Pain and injustice will never fall into oblivion. We will remember.

Remembering and commemorating past horrors gives us the knowledge and strength to reject those who seek to revive these ideologies or who seek to exonerate these ideologies of their crimes and culpability. The memory of the victims compels us to promote historical justice by continuing research and raising public awareness of the totalitarian legacy on the European continent.

The basis for sustainable conciliation and building a common future is justice and objective truth. Victims of totalitarian crimes have a right to justice. Unfortunately, the practice of investigating and prosecuting the crimes of totalitarian regimes has been insufficient and inconsistent across countries.

We call upon the governments of all European countries to provide both moral and material support to the ongoing historical investigation of the totalitarian regimes. By acting in a concerted manner, we can counter more effectively disinformation campaigns and attempts to manipulate historical facts.

We must stand together against totalitarianism. A clear and firm position of the international community will pave the way to further reconciliation.

We are confident that today's Europe is a safe place for all peoples, and ready to resolutely resist any kind of injustice. We believe that Europeans will never tolerate totalitarianism or genocide against any people.

Our countries have been reborn as free and democratic nations after decades of totalitarian rule. Thirty years ago, our nations started the democratic transformations that eventually made us equal and vigorous members of the European Union. Our countries are determined to continue working with our partners in Europe and around the world so that the horrors of the past never re-emerge.

Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Estonia Urmas Reinsalu

Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia Edgars Rinkēvičs

Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania Linas

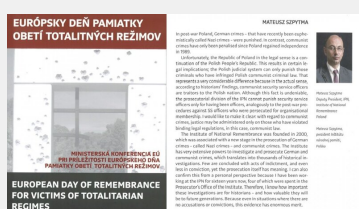
Linkevičius

Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland Jacek Czaputowicz

Minister of Foreign Affairs of Romania Ramona-Nicole Mănescu

<https://www.gov.pl/web/diplomacy/joint-statement-by-estonia-latvia-lithuania-poland-and-romania-on-the-occasion-of-80-years-since-the-signing-of-molotov-ribbentrop-pact>

We recommend reading a text authored by Deputy President of the Institute of National Remembrance, Dr Mateusz Szpytma presented during an international Ministerial Conference organised by the Slovak Nation's Memory Institute on 23 August 2016.



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