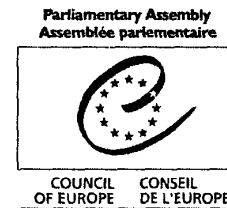


Parliamentary Assembly Assemblée parlementaire



Doc. 10925rev. (english only)
31 May 2006

Establishment of a European remembrance centre for victims of forced population movements and ethnic cleansing

Report
Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population
Rapporteur: Mr Mats Einarsson, Sweden, Group of the Unified European Left

Summary

During the recent history of Europe, millions of people have been forcibly expelled, transferred or exchanged by reason of their ethnicity, as a result of the delimitation of new state borders or to solve the question of ethnic minorities or, again, on the basis of deliberate policies of ethnic cleansing. Mass deportations have been used to punish some national, ethnic or social groups for their imputed political opinion and hundreds of thousands of people have felt compelled to leave their homeland for fear of being persecuted by oppressive regimes or within new state borders.

As these crimes imply numerous and serious human rights violations, they do not only concern the populations that had to endure them but all the peoples of Europe. Therefore it is the task of the Council of Europe, as a pan-European organisation with the aim of achieving a greater unity between its members for the purpose of safeguarding and realising the ideals and principles which are their common heritage, to commemorate the victims of such acts to ensure that history is not repeated.

To this end, the Council of Europe should establish a European remembrance centre for victims of forced population movements and ethnic cleansing to remind Europeans of their history of forced migration, to favour reconciliation, to act as an instrument of conflict prevention and to sensitize public opinion to the personal tragedy of individuals who, as part of a group, had to leave due to fear of persecution or because they were forcibly expelled.

Bearing in mind the gravity of forced population movements in Europe, the human rights and humanitarian aspects involved, the geographical dimension of these tragic events and the intensity of the current debate in some Council of Europe member states, the Assembly calls for the creation of a remembrance centre where historical events could be discussed openly in an atmosphere of tolerance and mutual interest and to teach the young generation about the common European memory in order to overcome the divisions of the past and contribute to a Europe where cultural and religious differences are seen as a benefit and not as a threat.

A. Draft resolution

1. During the recent history of Europe, millions of people have been forcibly expelled, transferred or exchanged by reason of their ethnicity or political and religious beliefs, as a result of the delimitation of new state borders or to solve the question of ethnic minorities or, again, on the basis of deliberate policies of ethnic cleansing. Mass deportations have been used to punish some national, ethnic or social groups for their imputed political opinion and hundreds of thousands of people have felt compelled to leave their homeland for fear of being persecuted by oppressive regimes or within new state borders.

2. In the first half of the twentieth century, forced migration was a collective European experience. 60 to 80 Million Europeans were forced to leave their homeland, many of them never to return again. In Central and Eastern Europe hardly any nation or region was exempted from this tragedy. In recent years millions of people have been forcibly displaced in the Balkans and the Caucasus due to conflicts in these regions.

3. For a long time in history, the international community has acquiesced in and sometimes even encouraged population displacements and transfers as a means to bring durable peace to a region. Nowadays, deportation and forced population transfers could, under the statutes of a number of international tribunals, including the International Criminal Court, be prosecuted as crimes against humanity. In addition, it is widely recognized that they entail numerous and serious human rights violations.

4. As these crimes imply numerous and serious human rights violations they do not only concern the populations who had to endure them but all the peoples of Europe. Therefore it is the task of the Council of Europe, as a pan-European organisation with the aim of achieving a greater unity between its members for the purpose of safeguarding and realising the ideals and principles which are their common heritage, to commemorate the victims of such acts to ensure that history is not repeated.

5. To this end, the Council of Europe member states should establish a European remembrance centre for victims of forced population movements and ethnic cleansing to remind Europeans of their history of forced migration, to favour reconciliation, to act as an instrument of conflict prevention and to sensitize public opinion to the personal tragedy of individuals who, as part of a group, had to leave the countries or regions where they were settled due to fear of persecution or because they were physically removed.

6. A European remembrance centre for victims of forced population movements and ethnic cleansing should have some physical premises, however small, to be better perceived as a symbol of a common collective European memory. This centre will be principally aiming at educating young generations by teaching and promoting a common European memory in order to overcome the divisions of the past and contribute to a Europe where cultural and religious differences are seen as a benefit and not as a threat.

7. The Assembly, therefore, recommends that the Council of Europe member states:

7.1 take action for the establishment of a European remembrance centre for victims of forced population movements and ethnic cleansing (herewith 'the Centre'), under the auspices of the Council of Europe, according to the following guidelines:

7.1.1. the aims of the Centre should be to:

7.1.1.1. favour reconciliation by promoting impartial studies of history and contributing to the creation of a common European memory, overcoming the divisions of the past;

7.1.1.2. act as an instrument of conflict prevention by promoting the respect of human rights and the rights of persons belonging to national minorities; and

7.1.1.3. combat racism and xenophobia by sensitizing European public opinion to the human and human rights aspects of forced population movements and ethnic cleansing, in co-operation with the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI);

7.1.2. the mandate should cover forced movements of populations or groups, including those connected with policies or practices of ethnic cleansing which affected, affect or will affect the geographical area of the Council of Europe member states, with a particular focus on the 20th Century, whether they take place within the borders of one state or between two or more states. Due to its unique character, the mandate should not cover the deportation of Jews during the Second World War ; the numerous initiatives as well as the various centres established to commemorate the victims of the Shoah should however be used as valuable sources of inspiration for the creation and activities of the Centre to be established;

7.1.3. the functions should include, amongst others:

7.1.3.1. conducting or promoting research on the history of forced population movements as well as on relevant international and human rights law;

7.1.3.2. supporting the elaboration of educational materials for history teaching;

7.1.3.3. acting as a permanent forum of public and academic analysis and discussion, with the purpose of applying the lessons of the past to meeting the challenges of today and of the future;

7.1.3.4. organising conferences, seminars, exhibitions and other events; and

7.1.3.5. funding and supporting cross-border NGO initiatives in this field;

7.1.4. the Centre should not be concerned with the issue of compensation for the loss of property resulting from forced population movements;

7.2. as a legal basis for the establishment of the Centre and in order to assure funding outside the ordinary budget of the Council of Europe, consider drawing up an Agreement or a Partial Agreement, as set out in Statutory Resolution (93)28 of the Committee of Ministers, open to signature by member states, with a view to its implementation on the occasion of the Council of Europe's 60th Anniversary;

7.3. develop activities in this field and set up appropriate national centres;

7.4. use the Council of Europe as a catalyst and co-ordinator for the creation of a Centre and use the Council of Europe to foster a European network so as to enhance European co-operation in this field.

B. Draft recommendation

1. The Parliamentary Assembly refers to its Resolution..... "Establishment of a European remembrance centre for victims of forced population movements and ethnic cleansing", and recommends that the Committee of Ministers:

1.1. examine the feasibility of establishing a European remembrance centre for victims of forced population movements and ethnic cleansing (herewith 'the Centre'), under the auspices of the Council of Europe and present the results of this study to the Parliamentary Assembly within twelve months of its first response to this recommendation;

1.2. for the purpose of creating the Centre and assure funding outside the ordinary budget of the Council of Europe, assess the feasibility of drawing up an Agreement or a Partial Agreement, as set out in Statutory Resolution (93)28 of the Committee of Ministers, open to signature by member states, with a view to its implementation on the occasion of the Council of Europe's 60th Anniversary;

1.3. encourage members states to link relevant national and international initiatives / institutions with a view to developing an international network under the auspices of the Council of Europe on teaching and promoting remembrance.

C. Explanatory memorandum by Mr Einarsson, Rapporteur

I. Foreword

1. In the collective memory of the peoples of Europe there are wounds that have not healed. Exile has blighted the lives of millions of people and this suffering has been handed down from generation to generation. Sadly, this is not a memory of the distant past for our continent, since violent conflicts and forced population movements have been ravaging entire regions throughout the '90s and are still taking place.

2. During the debate on this issue in the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population, some members objected that the events concerning a certain nationality or group were inaccurate or absent. In response to these comments, your Rapporteur emphasizes that it is not his intention to present an exhaustive historical account of all mass deportations and population movements which have occurred in Europe in the 20th century, let alone to minimize the sufferings of some people and highlight others'. The present report provides only examples, drawn from contemporary European history, aimed at illustrating the pan-European dimension of phenomena such as mass deportations, expulsions and population transfers.

3. Your Rapporteur has taken care to indicate the sources of the information contained in this report. The presence of possible inaccuracies, gaps or mistakes should be attributed to the fact that different sources often give a different account of historical facts and that figures vary widely. This proves the need for an institution to promote impartial research about this traumatic period in our history that has left deep wounds in the collective memory of the peoples of Europe.

4. The initiative of creating a European remembrance centre for victims of forced population movements and ethnic cleansing in Europe should, as was stressed during the Polish chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in 2004, be aimed at achieving reconciliation in Europe by helping nations to overcome prejudice and negative stereotypes and to resolve disputes rooted in the difficult experience of the past.

5. The current initiative of creating a European remembrance centre for victims of forced population movements and ethnic cleansing in Europe should be considered in the context of this priority.

6. To prevent possible misunderstandings arising from the fact that words have different meanings and connotations in different languages, your Rapporteur wishes to clarify the meaning he attaches to some terms used in this report:

i. **Expulsion:** technically is the removal of a foreigner to another country. In practice this term is often used as a synonym of deportation.

ii. **Forced population transfer:** permanent movement of a large group of people, often defined by their ethnicity or religion, from one region to another. Sometimes two groups are transferred in opposite directions at about the same time, in which case the process is called **population exchange**.

iii. **Ethnic cleansing:** the displacement from a given territory of groups of people defined according to ethnic criteria forced, or tolerated or condoned by the state, in order to make the ethnic composition of that territory homogeneous.

iv. **Deportation:** the removal of someone from a territory. It can apply equally to foreigners and nationals; it can imply the removal inside the same country (**resettlement**) or abroad.

v. **Nation/nationality:** a group of people with a common language, culture and ethnicity.

vi. **Homeland:** is a "distinct geographical location within the territory of a State"¹.

7. Besides, your Rapporteur would like to delimitate the scope of his work:

i. **Personal scope:** this report will focus on expulsions, deportations, forced transfer and resettlement of large groups of people caused by a deliberate policy decision. The report will not deal with the plight of individual asylum seekers who have to leave their homeland due to fear of persecution, nor will it address the displacement of groups of people which cannot be attributed to a deliberate policy;

ii. **Material scope:** this report will not address the question of the effective right to receive compensation for the loss of properties resulting from forced deportations or transfers.

8. Your Rapporteur believes that it is not possible to discuss forced population movements without mentioning the deportation of Jews to concentration camps under the Nazi regime, in Germany as well as other territories under Nazi influence. This crime against humanity represents one of the most atrocious pages of European history. Due to its specificity, this issue will not be dealt with in this report. The numerous initiatives to commemorate the victims of the Shoah, however, as well as the activities conducted by the Council of Europe in the field of history teaching and the Holocaust, will be a valuable source of inspiration for the establishment of a European remembrance centre for victims of forced population movements and ethnic cleansing.

9. As a final remark, your Rapporteur wishes to thank all those who have taken part in the Seminar on the Establishment of the centre for European Nations' Remembrance under the auspices of the Council of Europe (Geneva, 4 November 2004), for their valuable contribution to the present report. He would also like to thank Dr. Barbro Eberan, journalist and writer, for her support in drafting the current report.

II. Introduction

10. *'The right not to be expelled from one's homeland is a fundamental human right'*². This statement may sound clear and apparent to all of us and yet the history of Europe is characterised by forced population transfers and mass deportations, resulting from deliberate policies and often conducted as an instrument of ethnic cleansing. Other times, groups of people have felt compelled to leave their homes and belongings for fear of being persecuted by oppressive regimes or in new state borders.

11. In September 2003, Mr Klich (Poland, EPP/CD) and other parliamentarians tabled a motion for a recommendation on the establishment of the centre for European Nations' Remembrance under the auspices of the Council of Europe. This initiative was in response to the debate which had arisen in Germany over the setting up of a centre Against Expulsions (*Zentrum gegen Vertreibungen*) in Berlin, as proposed, amongst others, by the so-called Expellees' Association (*Bund der Vertriebenen, BdV*), a non-governmental organisation formed by the descendants of ethnic Germans who were expelled from the eastern territories of the Reich which were lost after the second world war as well as from other regions, including the territories incorporated or occupied during the war.

12. The proposed creation of a centre in Berlin provoked a lively debate in Germany and caused tension in bilateral relations with Poland, also with reference to the issue of the compensation for the properties that were lost as a result of expulsions.

13. The case of Germans expelled from central Europe is outstanding given the number of people concerned, but not unique. As the present report will describe, many other groups in Europe have been expelled or otherwise forced to leave their homeland for ethnic, religious or political reasons.

¹ United Nations, Commission on Human Rights, Final report of the Special Rapporteur Mr Al-Khasawneh on human rights and population transfer, 27 June 1997 (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1997/23).

² Statement of Mr José Ayala-Lasso, former United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 28 May 1995.

14. The motion presented by Mr Klich and others had first of all the merits of placing the issues of mass deportations and forced population transfers in their right context: these acts offend the conscience of all the peoples of Europe and not only of those who had to endure them. It is therefore the task of the Council of Europe as a pan-European organisation with the aim of achieving a greater unity between its members for the purpose of safeguarding and realising the ideals and principles which are their common heritage, to commemorate the victims of such acts while ensuring that history is not repeated.

15. Finally, as to the adoption of the recommendation, a first draft (Doc.10378) was presented to the Assembly in January 2005 and gave rise to an intense debate and several proposals for amendment. A majority voted in favour of the amended text (37 in favour, 30 against). However it was not a 2/3 majority as required for a recommendation to be passed. A new motion for a resolution was presented by Mr. Bindig (Doc.10469) on 8 March 2005 and I was confirmed as a Rapporteur.

III. The proposed centre against Expulsions (*Zentrum gegen Vertreibungen*) in Berlin: history of a controversy

16. As your Rapporteur already mentioned in the introduction, the planned construction of a 'Centre against Expulsions' in Berlin generated a great deal of controversy in Germany. This was to be a memorial to the former German refugees from eastern Europe, i.e. the millions of Germans forced to leave their homes between 1945 and 1947 to resettle within Germany's new borders established by the Potsdam Conference.

17. The principal aim of this project was to commemorate the victims and show how Germany managed to integrate millions of refugees after the Second World War. It was also meant to encourage a reflection on the history of expulsions in the 20th century. Its promoters, Erika Steinbach, Member of Bundestag (CDU) and President of the Expellees' Association, and Peter Glotz, a member of the board of the Centre against Expulsions Foundation, ex-Secretary General of the SPD, and German member of the European Convention, wanted to 'raise the awareness of people around the world' on the 'suffering of the expellees' in order that such a 'violation of human rights' would never be repeated³.

18. Many people both in Germany and abroad objected to this project. In Poland it has been fiercely opposed as too selective and focusing exclusively on the German past whereas Europe is moving towards further integration. There was a fear that the centre would serve the purpose of emphasising the suffering endured by the Germans and minimize the crimes committed by Nazi Germany. Many Poles felt that German expellees were put on the same footing as the Polish victims of German war crimes. Another criticism was that the Expellees' Association started this project without consulting experts from other countries concerned.

19. The creation of the Prussian Claims Society (PSC), an agency modelled on the Jewish Claims Conference, contributed to fuel the controversy. This agency has the aim of supporting the property claims of individual expellees by filing lawsuits before Polish and Czech courts, to obtain compensation for the assets they lost as a result of expulsions. According to PSC's estimates, 13 per cent of those who were expelled from Poland owned real estate there and 30,000 compensation claims are still unsettled⁴. The Prussian Claims Society and Expellees' associations argue that if compensation claims filed with Poland and other countries were not to be successful, they should be satisfied by Germany.

20. Some leading German figures shared the criticism that the initial project focused exclusively on the expulsion of Germans, to the exclusion of other nationalities who endured the same plight.

21. An alternative approach was proposed by Markus Meckel (German Parliamentarian, SPD), Adam Michnik (one of the leaders of the Solidarity trade union movement, founder and editor of the largest Polish daily newspaper, *Gazeta Wyborcza*) and Adam Krzeminski (Political commentator and journalist, editor of the Polish magazine *Polityka*). The idea was to initiate a dialogue among central European

³ Cf. *Zentrum gegen Vertreibungen* (www.z-g-v.de).

⁴ *Deutsche Welle – World*, 3 August 2004, www.dw-world.de.

interference with rights enshrined in various international instruments³⁵. Collective expulsions of foreigners, finally, are prohibited by Article 4 of Protocol 4 of the European Convention on Human Rights³⁶.

57. In parallel to the progressive acceptance of the prohibition of these acts, another branch of international law developed: the cornerstone of international refugee protection, that is the Geneva Convention relating to the status of refugees, and the statute of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees were created under the still vivid impression of the atrocities committed by the fascist regimes, of the sufferings endured by the civilian population during the second world war as well as the multi-faceted displacement caused by the war³⁷.

58. Deportations and forced population transfers have been used as forms of punishment against potential opponents and as instruments of ethnic cleansing. It is important, however, to realise that very often in history deportations and transfers have been regarded by states as the only way to protect their own nationals abroad or by a coalition of states to bring lasting peace to a region. This position is epitomised by the statement made by Sir Winston Churchill in the House of Commons in 1944 that *'Expulsion is the method which, in so far as we have been able to see, will be the most satisfactory and lasting. There will be no mixture of populations to cause endless trouble... A clean sweep will be made. I am not alarmed by these transferences, which are more possible in modern conditions...'*

59. At first sight, it would seem that this approach is completely outdated and superseded. It is true that Council of Europe member states have committed themselves to the respect of the rights of national minorities, amongst others through the ratification of the Framework Convention on the Protection of National Minorities³⁸. It cannot be forgotten, however, that the approach of the international community to finding a durable solution for the former Yugoslavia was by separating different ethnic groups.

60. Despite the undeniable evolution of international law, therefore, your Rapporteur believes that the Council of Europe should make further efforts to familiarise the general public with the plight of forced population movements, disseminate information on the protection of national minorities and intercultural dialogue, and finally conduct a consistent diplomatic activity to obtain from member states an unwavering commitment to the respect of the rights of national minorities, refugees and internally displaced persons.

VI. A European remembrance centre for victims of forced population movements and ethnic cleansing

61. As long as the subject of forced population movements was used as a political instrument historical research was hardly possible. But with the collapse of the Soviet Union the situation changed fundamentally. New sources became available, and as frontiers fell it was possible to establish international and interdisciplinary cooperation. Experts from different countries have met to analyse the forced migration waves in Europe and to discuss what actions should be taken in order to heal the wounds and to solve the conflicts resulting from the expulsions in the last century³⁹.

³⁵ The expert group set up in the framework of the activities of the Special Rapporteur on Human rights and population transfer of the UN Commission on Human Rights has drawn up a list of human rights norms affected by population transfers.

³⁶ This Protocol has been ratified by all Council of Europe member states with the exception of Andorra, Liechtenstein, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey and the United Kingdom.

³⁷ UNHCR's contribution to the Seminar on the establishment of the Centre for European Nations' Remembrance under the auspices of the Council of Europe.

³⁸ ETS 157. This Convention has been ratified by most Council of Europe member states. The exceptions are France, Georgia, Greece, Iceland, Latvia, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Turkey.

³⁹ see Bingen/Borodziej/Troebst (ed.): "Vertreibungen europäisch erinnern? Historische Erfahrungen – Vergangenheitspolitik – Zukunftskonzeptionen", 2003, report from an international congress on forced migration in Germany 2002 with contributions by experts from different countries.

See also Bülent Kaya: "The changing face of Europe – population flows in the 20th century", Council of Europe Publishing, 2002.

62. In order to achieve reconciliation in Europe it is therefore necessary to integrate these crimes against humanity into the collective memory of Europe. The establishment of a European remembrance centre should help to develop a common historical consciousness in Europe by supporting the European nations to come to terms with their past.

63. It is a fundamental challenge to unify countries with such different historical backgrounds and collective memories. To overcome and prevent prejudices and misunderstandings it should be one of the essential tasks of the Centre to encourage people from different countries to share their thoughts and feelings across borders.

64. The first step towards the establishment of a European remembrance centre for victims of forced population movements and ethnic cleansing is to create political agreement on the initiative. This is the role of the Parliamentary Assembly.

65. Once this political agreement is reached, details such as name, funding and structure could be decided on the basis of an expert report, commissioned by the Committee of Ministers through one or more specialised committees or relevant Council of Europe directorates, in the framework of guidelines laid down by the Assembly.

i. Objectives

66. Your Rapporteur firmly believes that a European remembrance centre for victims of forced population movements and ethnic cleansing under the auspices of the Council of Europe should be a non-political and impartial institution. The aim of such a Centre should be to testify the suffering endured by the victims, with a view to sensitizing the wide European public to these tragedies and promote dialogue between nations.

67. Rather than a memorial or a museum, the Centre should be a living institution, engaged in the organisation of events and the support of initiatives and projects. In this sense, the centre should be an instrument to prevent future conflicts, promote the respect of human rights and in particular the rights of national minorities, and contribute to the fight against intolerance, racism and discrimination.

68. The Centre should aim at conveying historical knowledge and supporting impartial historical studies. The member countries in the Council of Europe should take the responsibility to convey this knowledge by describing the events in the past from their national point of view and by analyzing what marks these events have left in their national collective memory. This would allow for a better understanding across borders.

69. The Centre should establish co-operation with relevant initiatives and institutions in other European countries. The Centre should not only aim at improving communication on a high scholarly level but also encourage the dialogue between the generations. One of the essential tasks should be to develop didactic material to be used for discussions in schools and other pedagogic institutions. For the future of Europe it is very important that the young generations are given the chance not only to acquire knowledge about what happened in the past but also to share their thoughts and feelings about these events and to discuss what we can learn from the past for the present and for the future.

70. To prevent conflicts in the future the Centre should aim at creating a network where different views on European history could be discussed openly across the borders. It should be the essential task of the Centre to encourage people from different countries to share their thoughts and feelings in an atmosphere of tolerance and mutual interest. The past should be commemorated as a warning for the present and the future without reviving animosities and by concentrating on building up a multi-faceted Europe where cultural and religious differences are seen as a benefit and not as a threat.

ii. *Functions*

71. The function of the Centre should include:

i. **research and education**, by building up on existing expertise from inside and outside the Council of Europe, with a view to producing materials for school teachers and students, in the framework of the activities on history teaching conducted by the Council of Europe; or by supporting research projects in the areas of history, law, protection of national minorities, etc. In this context, it is relevant to mention the activities conducted by the General Directorate IV of the Council of Europe in the field of history teaching and the production of school materials.

ii. **public awareness-raising**, through the organisation of targeted or general campaigns, exhibitions, the publication of information material, etc.;

iii. **documentation and information**, accessible to governments, NGOs, scholars, students and the general public;

iv. **permanent discussion**, through the organisations of conferences and seminars bringing together politicians, academics, non-governmental organisations and other relevant actors.

iii. *Structure and funding*

72. Your Rapporteur believes that a European remembrance centre for victims of forced population movements and ethnic cleansing should have some physical premises, however small, to be better perceived as a symbol of a common collective European memory.

73. The question of whether to set up a virtual centre or a physical facility will have to be studied in detail in the light of expert opinions and the development of the project. In any case, it seems useful to establish a network of existing institutions and initiatives dealing with this issue and to pool their resources.

74. A physical facility could adopt the status of a European foundation with its own governing board, executive committee and secretariat. As an alternative, it could be attached to the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Museum.

75. Finally, a project under the auspices of the Council of Europe could be set up in the form of a partial agreement between the states wishing to participate, following a decision by the Committee of Ministers. This would enable the institution to have its own budget funded by the contributions of participating states.

76. The centre could be funded either with financial support from the various governments involved in the project or with assistance from interested institutions.

iv. *Partnerships*

77. The centre should be set up in close cooperation with relevant international agencies and national remembrance centres. The Committee of Ministers, through one or more of its specialised committees, should draw up a list of institutional resources available and consult the various national and international organisations that are engaged in research activities or have documentation available on the subject of expulsions and forced transfers.

78. The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Museum deals with the issues of expulsions and ethnic cleansing by organising a number of exhibitions on the fate of the displaced victims and will therefore be a key partner for the establishment of this centre.

79. Within the Council of Europe, the bodies dealing with migration and their experts – the European Committee on Migration (which deals with pan-European migration policies and migratory flows) and the Specialist Group on Roma, Gypsies and Travellers – should be involved in the project. The Directorate General of Political Affairs and Directorate General IV - Education, Culture and Heritage, Youth and Sport have also closely followed the discussions on the project, and both should therefore be closely associated to the development of a concrete proposal for the establishment of the centre.

VII. Conclusions and recommendations

80. This report is about a multi-faceted phenomenon: forced population movements. It is multi-faceted because it encompasses expulsions, deportations and exchanges of populations; it can take place within one or between more countries; it is used as a form of punishment for imputed political opinion, a means of ethnic cleansing or a way to solve the issue of national, ethnic or religious minorities. However multi-faceted and complex, it is a single phenomenon having the following features: 1) it has a mass dimension, since it concerns entire populations, national or ethnic groups, or otherwise identifiable groups of people; 2) it is forced, either directly or indirectly; 3) at present, it is unlawful on the basis of international human rights law and international criminal law.

81. Forced population movements are a human rights and a pan-European issue. This is why the Council of Europe is the appropriate instance in which they should be addressed, in the context of the organisation's fundamental aim which is *'to achieve a greater unity between its members for the purpose of safeguarding and realising the ideals and principles which are their common heritage (...)*'.⁴⁰

82. Why should the Council of Europe establish 'a centre'? Because the remembrance of forced population movements and ethnic cleansing in Europe is still a politically controversial issue, at national and bilateral level. If, as the Polish Presidency argues, *'it is essential to overcome prejudice, negative stereotypes and resolve disputed rooted in the difficult experience of the past'*, it is also essential to give a clear, visible and tangible sign that the moment for doing so has come.

83. If the establishment of a physical centre is important, this should not duplicate the activities already conducted at national and international level by other institutions, such as the International Museum of the Red Cross and Red Crescent or national remembrance centres. The Council of Europe centre should, instead, act as a 'coordinating' structure, enabling institutions relevant in this field to communicate effectively, interact, cooperate and conduct joint programmes. In this way, the initiatives undertaken would have a more far-reaching, European-wide impact.

84. In addition, a European remembrance centre for victims of forced population movements and ethnic cleansing should promote activities such as the organisation of conferences and seminars, historical and legal research, the publication of handbooks and school materials. The Council of Europe has the expertise to do this, drawing from its experience in related fields, such as remembrance of the Holocaust, history teaching, the promotion of intercultural dialogue and the protection of ethnic minorities.

85. Your Rapporteur asks the members of the Parliamentary Assembly to support the idea of the establishment of a centre, to signify the firm refusal of forced migration and ethnic cleansing and to contribute to the creation of a common European memory of these tragic events in the past.

⁴⁰ Statute of the Council of Europe (ETS 1), Article 1.

Reporting committee: Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population

Reference to committee: Doc. 10469, Ref. 3065, 18.3.2005 – see also Ref. 2880 (25.11.2003) and 2916 (26.1.2004)

Draft resolution and draft recommendation unanimously adopted by the Committee on 11 April 2006.

Members of the Committee: Mr Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu (Chairperson), Mrs Tana de Zulueta (1st Vice-Chairperson), Mr Doros **Christodoulides** (2nd Vice-Chairperson), Mr Jean-Guy **Branger** (3rd Vice-Chairperson), Mr Pedro Agramunt, Mr Külle Arjakas, Mr Hüseyin-Kenan **Aydin**, Mr Ryszard **Bender**, Mr Akhmed Bilalov, Mrs Mimount Bousakla (alternate: Mr Paul **Wille**), Mr Ivan **Brajović**, Mr Márton Braun, Lord Burlison (alternate: Mr Bill **Etherington**), Mr Christopher **Chope**, Mr Boriss **Cilevičs**, Mrs Minodora **Cliveti**, Mrs Elvira Cortajarena (alternate: Mr Joan **Puig Cordón**), Mr Franco Danieli, Mr Joseph Debono Grech, Mr Taulant **Dedja**, Mr Nikolaos **Dendias**, Mr Abilio **Dias Fernandes**, Mr Karl **Donabauer**, Mr Mats **Einarsson**, Mrs Lydie Err, Mr Valeriy **Fedorov**, Mrs Daniela Filipiová, Mrs Margrét Frimannsdóttir (alternate: Mrs Gudrún **Ögmundsdóttir**), Mrs Gunn Karin Gjøl, Mrs Angelika **Graf**, Mr John **Greenway**, Mr Andrzej **Grzyb**, Mr Ali Riza **Gülççek**, Mr Michael Hagberg, Mr Holger **Haibach**, Ms Gultakin Hajiyeva, Mr Doug Henderson (alternate: Mr Michael **Hancock**), Mr Jürgen Herrmann, Mr Ilie **Ilaşcu**, Mr Tadeusz **Iwiński**, Mrs Corien W.A. Jonker (alternate: Mr Ed **van Thijn**), Mr Oleksandr Karpov, Mrs Eleonora Katseli, Mr Tibor Kékesi, Mr Dimitrij **Kovačič**, Mr Petr Lachnit (alternate: Mr Tomáš **Jirsa**), Mr Geert Lambert, Mr Jean-Marie Le Guen (alternate: Mr Denis **Jacquat**), Mr Younal Loutfi, Mr Jean-Pierre Masseret (alternate: Mr Rudy **Salles**), Mrs Ana Catarina **Mendonça**, Mr Morten **Messerschmidt**, Mr Paschal **Mooney**, Mr Giuseppe Naro, Mr Xhevdet Nasufi, Mr Gebhard **Negele**, Mr Pasquale Nessa, Mrs Annette Nijs, Mr Kalevi **Olin**, Mr İbrahim **Özal**, Mr Cezar Florin **Preda**, Mr Alojz Přidal, Mr Gabino Puche (alternate: Mr Adolfo **Fernández Aguilar**), Mr Milorad Pupovac, Mr Martin Raguž, Mr Anatolij Rakhansky, Mr Marc **Reymann**, Mr Branko Ružič, Mr Samad Seyidov (alternate: Mr Mr **Aydin Mirzazada**), Mr Luzi Stamm (alternate: Mrs Rosmarie **Zapfl-Helbling**), Mr Sergiu Stati, Mrs Terezija **Stoisits**, Mrs Elene Tevdoradze, Mr Tigran **Torosyan**, Mrs Ruth-Gaby **Vermot-Mangold**, Mrs Iliana Yotova, Mr Akhmar Zavgayev, Mr Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, Mr Serhiy Zhyzhko, Mr Emanuelis Zingeris.

N.B. The names of the members who took part in the meeting are printed in bold.

Secretaries of the Committee: Mr Halvor Lervik, Mr Mark Neville, Ms Dana Karanjac