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Need for condemnation of crimes of communist regimes

Written question No 486 to the Chairman of the Committee of Ministers

Reply of the Committee of Ministers

I. Written Question No. 486 by Mr Lindblad (Doc. 10867)

The Parliamentary Assembly has strongly condemned the extensive and wide-ranging human rights abuses committed by the Franco regime in Spain from 1939 to 1975. The recommendation was adopted unanimously on March 17 and calls on the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers to adopt a similar declaration at international level.

My question is whether the Committee of Ministers would address also the need for condemnation of crimes of the communist regimes as the Assembly did in its Resolution 1481 (2006).

The totalitarian communist regimes which ruled in Central and Eastern Europe in the last century, and which still are in power in several countries in the world, have been, without exception, characterised by the massive violation of human rights. The public awareness of crimes committed by totalitarian communist regimes is, however, poor. A political assessment of the crimes of communism is presented in my report to the Assembly (Doc. 10765).

Reply:

1. The Committee of Ministers has taken due note of the Honourable Parliamentarian's observations formulated in Written Question No. 486. In the reply it has given to Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 1736 (2006) on the need for international condemnation of the Franco regime, to which Mr Lindblad is referring, the Committee of Ministers "condemns the repeated serious human rights violations by the Franco regime and agrees that it is important to remember the crimes by all totalitarian regimes so as to avoid repeating the errors of the past". On that occasion, the Committee of Ministers underlined that it was necessary not to "singl[e] out one regime rather than another [in order not to] create the mistaken impression that some totalitarian regimes are worthier of condemnation than others, whereas all of them collectively merit our reprobation".

2. With this in mind, the Committee of Ministers firmly condemns crimes committed by totalitarian regimes in the name of communist ideology. It recalls how important it is to be fully aware of and to respect the suffering caused to victims of such crimes and to their families. These tragedies dictate that everything be done to prevent the recurrence of such phenomena in the future.