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17 April 2007

## Attitude to memorials to fighters against fascism in Council of Europe member states

Motion for a resolution  
presented by Mr Hancock and others

This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only the members who have signed it

1. Radical changes in the field of inter-ethnic relations have become increasingly visible lately in some European countries. Speculations on xenophobic and revanchist moods have become usual elements of internal political struggle. Unfortunately, in some cases, official authorities of the Council of Europe member states are tolerant towards political extremists and follow the tastes of those who would like to distort the historical truth for the sake of electoral interests. This becomes apparent as regards the attitude towards historic monuments.
2. Estonian authorities, proceeding from the War Graves Protection Bill that entered into force on 11 January 2007, intend to dismantle the monument of Soldier-Liberator in the city-centre of Tallinn under which there are war graves of soldiers who died in the battle for the liberation of the City against fascists.
3. On the initiative of The World Association of Hungarians, a campaign was launched to move from the centre of Budapest the monument to Soviet soldiers who died in the battle for the Hungarian capital during World War II.
4. During the past two years already, allegedly because of the imprecise names of localities and “overstatement” of the number of victims, the museum leadership closed for visitors the “Russian exhibition” in the former Nazi concentration camp Oswiecim (Auschwitz) in Poland.
5. Such acts contravene the consolidated position of the Assembly that attaches importance to careful attitude to historical memory and that on 25 January 2005 erected in Strasbourg, near the Council of Europe premises, a Memorial Stone dedicated to the memory of all the prisoners of all the fascist concentration camps.
6. We remind that the Assembly in its Resolution 1495 (2006) on Combating the Resurgence of Nazi Ideology paid *special tribute to the glory of all those who fought in the ranks of “anti-Hitler coalition” and saved the humanity from the Nazi “new order”*. It also urged to *step up co-ordinated action in order to resist efforts aiming at revitalising Nazi ideology*.
7. Admitting various assessments of the historic role of the USSR in the after-the-war development of a number of East European states, we believe that such acts have nothing to do with the current debate and mean infringement of the democratic standards of the Council of Europe implying respect to the memory of victims of struggle against fascism during World War II, irrespective of their nationality, and certainly require an adequate response of the Assembly.

8. Consequently, and taking into account paragraph 16 of Resolution 1495 (2006), we deem it necessary to scrutinise the issue of the official attitude of Council of Europe member states as regards the preservation of memorials to the victims of the struggle against fascism.

*Signed*<sup>1</sup>:

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<sup>1</sup> SOC: Socialist Group  
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party  
ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe  
EDG: European Democratic Group  
UEL: Group of the Unified European Left  
NR: not registered in a group