

PC.DEL/97/18  
1 February 2018

ENGLISH  
Original: RUSSIAN

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,  
AT THE 1174th MEETING OF THE  
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

1 February 2018

**In response to the address by the  
Chair of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance**

Mr. Chairperson,

I should like to take this opportunity to express our support for the successful OSCE conference on anti-Semitism, which was held in Rome on 29 January.

Mr. Galizia,

We thank you for your insightful address.

Seventy-three years ago Red Army soldiers liberated the Auschwitz-Birkenau death camp, also known as Oświęcim. In 2005, the United Nations officially proclaimed 27 January International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust. I should also like to recall that on 27 January we marked the 74th anniversary of the complete liberation of Leningrad from the Nazi siege. This was yet another act of heroism by Soviet soldiers, before whom we bow our heads.

Soviet troops brought a halt to one of the “death factories” in which up to 4 million people, including around a million Jews, had been systematically exterminated. All told, more than 6 million people became victims of the Holocaust. For the peoples of Russia, as for the other peoples of the multi-ethnic Soviet Union, who sacrificed more than 26 million lives for victory in the Second World War, the preservation of the historical memory of these terrible events remains a national responsibility.

Jews themselves made a significant contribution to the victory over Nazism. Over half a million Jews fought in the ranks of the Red Army and more than 40,000 Jews joined partisan units. In that connection, I should like to remember the heroic feat of a Red Army lieutenant named Alexander Pechersky. Under his command, an uprising was organized in the Sobibor extermination camp on 14 October 1943 – the only successful uprising at a camp in the history of the Second World War. The 75th anniversary of that event will be marked this year. Russia will continue working to ensure that its historically justified right to

contribute to the international project to modernize the museum and memorial at the site of the camp be respected.

Remembrance Week is held each year in Russia during the days of mourning for the victims of the Holocaust. One of its events this year was the “Yellow Stars” gala concert organized in Moscow by the Russian Jewish Congress with the support of the Moscow City Government and Israel’s Nativ Liaison Bureau. All of the funds raised will be given to the “Restoring Dignity” project, under which 26 monuments to the victims of the Holocaust are to be erected in Russia in 2018. The cornerstone for the first of these – a memorial to resistance fighters in Nazi camps and ghettos – was laid by Russia’s Chief Rabbi Berel Lazar on 29 January.

“The Holocaust: Destruction, Liberation and Salvation” historical exhibition was opened at the Federation Council (the upper house of the Russian Parliament). This exhibition was also recently presented at the UN Headquarters in New York by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Russia Sergey Lavrov.

The high point of the events was a visit to Moscow by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on 29 January timed to coincide with the International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust. The leaders of Russia and Israel visited the Jewish Museum and Tolerance Centre and toured the exhibition “Sobibor: Victorious over Death”. Vladimir Putin and Benjamin Netanyahu also attended the first screening of the Russian film “Sobibor”. Incidentally, Mr. Netanyahu said that “Jewish life in Russia is thriving, largely owing to the support of the authorities.”

I should also like to point out that Israel’s Ministry of Diaspora Affairs said in its anti-Semitism report for 2017 that last year saw a continuation of the downward trend in the number of anti-Semitic attacks recorded in Russia. I should also quote the President of the World Jewish Congress Ronald Lauder, who said three days ago when addressing the OSCE conference in Rome on anti-Semitism that “Russia is one of the safest places for Jewish people to live in, and this is thanks to Vladimir Putin.”

Crimes like the Holocaust must not be repeated. Attempts to rewrite the history of the Second World War, to justify the crimes committed by the Nazis and their collaborators, and to give equal rights to victims and executioners, pave the way for the revival of a deadly ideology. A creeping rehabilitation of Nazism is under way in a number of OSCE States. These activities challenge the post-war security architecture, which is based on the Charter of the United Nations, the rulings of the Nuremberg Tribunal and other inviolable international legal documents. Of particular concern is the situation in Ukraine, where the banners of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army, which participated in the mass and brutal murders of Jews and people from other ethnic groups, including the notorious Volhynia massacre, are being raised again. Their criminal leaders – Stepan Bandera and Roman Shukhevych – are hailed as national heroes. Members of the Galicia Waffen SS Volunteer Division are celebrated.

The sacrilegious law on the status of participants in the Second World War, which exonerates the Nazis, entered into force in Latvia today. Marches by Latvian Legion veterans take place every year.

Monuments to members of the SS have been erected in Estonia, and gatherings of SS veterans and their followers are held annually.

Monuments to Red Army soldiers who gave their lives to stop the Holocaust are being destroyed and desecrated in Poland.

All of this defiles the memory of the many millions of victims of Nazism and fascism. The President of the European Jewish Congress Viatcheslav Moshe Kantor spoke about the resurgence of Nazism in European Union countries in his recent statement at the International Holocaust Remembrance Day commemorative event at the European Parliament.

Russia submits a resolution on combating the glorification of Nazism to the UN General Assembly every year. The number of co-sponsors of this resolution is growing steadily. In 2017, only two countries – the United States of America and Ukraine – under spurious pretexts voted against condemning those who exterminated Jews and other ethnic groups. This reveals the true essence of the policies of the authorities in Washington and Kyiv.

In conclusion, I should like to point out that it is our sacred duty not only to honour the memory of the innocent victims but also to do our utmost to prevent such tragedies from happening again.

Thank you for your attention.