

## International campaign to remember the victims of Holodomor begins



On June 19, 2010, in Kyiv began the international campaign “Keep the Memory Candle Alight” dedicated to honoring the victims of the Holodomor of 1932-33. As reports a correspondent of UNIAN, over 1.5 thousand people including the head of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church His Beatitude Lubomyr (Husar), Patriarch Filaret of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Kyivan Patriarchate, numerous hierarchs and priests, and notable public figures and politicians like Oksana Zabuzhko, Volodymyr Ohryzko, Vasyl Vovkun, and Volodymyr Stretovych gathered near the Holodomor Memorial to pray and honor the memory of the Ukrainians who became the victims of the artificial famine in Ukraine 1932-33.

The head of the UGCC commented that the event is very important because it once again reminds the world about the terrifying crimes. “People need think about what happened because all the horror can be repeated. History repeats itself. But if we sincerely wish, try to understand this terrible misfortune, this crime, with Divine help we can prevent such events from repeating in Ukraine or in any other country of the world.”

The head of the UGCC stressed that the event should not be viewed as a protest against the words of

President Yanukovich in Strasburg that the “Holodomor is not a genocide of Ukrainians.” According to him, even though Yanukovich is Ukraine’s president he “is not the absolute spokesperson of the nation as any other president of any country, therefore one should not view it as a protest.”

The memory service during the event was led by Patriarch Filaret, Patriarch Lubomyr, and hierarchs of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church.

According to the head of the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory, Ihor Yukhnovskiy, in 1933 took place “the intentional murder by starvation of the ethnic group of the Ukrainian peasants.” He noted that until 1932 all the territory of the Soviet Union was affected by famine. “But it must be clearly stated what happened later: on January 1, 1933, Stalin - at that time the dictator of the Soviet Union - demanded, especially the Ukrainian peasants, to hand over the grain. And that if they did not hand it over, they were to be severely punished. And from then on all over Ukraine not only were all the remains of food taken, but food was even taken out of the peasants’ pans and plates. Thus the famine in Ukraine only grew,” underlined the head of the institute.

According to Yukhnovskiy, at the height of famine, in particular in the summer of 1933, in one month 1.2 million people died from starvation in Ukraine. Overall, 3.36 million people were killed in the Holodomor. Yukhnovskiy also said that the overall loss of Ukraine considering those who were not born was about 10 million people.

“And these numbers are true; I have evidence at the institute, which was gathered during a judicial investigation. Thus, this was truly an intentional murder by starvation,” he underlined.

Ihor Yukhnovskiy expressed regret that representatives of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Moscow Patriarchate did not take part in the joint memorial event.

According to the coordinator of the campaign in Ukraine Volodymyr Vyatrovych, the candles blessed during this event will be distributed to cities of Ukraine and the world, in particular, Great Britain, Australia, USA, Spain, Canada, Argentina, Brazil, Greece, and Russia. Overall the campaign will be conducted in 32 countries, and participants will include representatives of different religions and confessions, politicians, governmental officials, and the Ukrainian diaspora. A candle will also be distributed to the European Parliament and the United Nations.

“Ukrainians and citizens of other countries will not allow the crime of the Holodomor genocide of 1932-1933 to be silenced, will honor the memory of the innocent victims, and will remind the world about events which must never be repeated,” said Vyatrovych. According to him, the campaign will end in Kyiv in November 2010.

Information Department of the UGCC  
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