**Lift the ban on the Ukrainian flag!**

**Statement of the coalition "Remembrance Against War"**

We, the members of the civil society coalition "Remembrance Against War", protest against the ban of the Ukrainian flag, which is included in the order of the Berlin police of 4 May 2022 for the commemoration days of 8 and 9 May and which affects the events on this occasion and fifteen public city areas. We demand the immediate lifting of this ban before 8 May, which is written in point I e of the corresponding "general order". This officially regulates the "restriction of public use of public areas and of the freedom of assembly on 8 May 2022, 06:00, until 9 May 2022, 22:00, and in fifteen areas of the districts of Kreuzberg-Friedrichshain, Lichtenberg, Marzahn-Hellersdorf, Mitte, Reinickendorf, Pankow, Treptow-Köpenick and Spandau".

We welcome the commemoration of the end of World War II in 1945 for private and personal remembrance to be kept away from war propaganda, but see the implicit ban of the Ukrainian flag in this context as a - possibly momentous - mistake by the Berlin Senate and the Berlin police.

The ban described in the general order - which affects, for example, the two-day programme "Remembrance Against War" organised by the Demokrati-JA initiative within the framework of our coalition - includes not only the relevant propaganda signs of the Kremlin (including the Saint George’s Ribbon, the symbols Z and V, flags of illegal "people's republics" etc.) but also the "display of flags with Russian or Ukrainian references". This thus includes not only the Russian flag, which stands for the aggressor in the current war, but also the Ukrainian flag, which stands for the people and cities under attack as well as for the independent state under attack.

Such an equation of aggressor and defending country is unacceptable. The city of Berlin runs the risk of positioning itself insensitively and not in solidarity in the face of the advancing war to Ukraine and to the international public. The necessity of Ukraine to defend itself against an imperial and dictatorial war of aggression and thus also to stand up for international law and democracy is thus not adequately appreciated.

This is particularly dangerous in the run-up to 8/9 May 2022, when Berlin, Germany and the international public will not only commemorate the end of the war, the liberation from fascism and the victory of the Allies, but also the value of human life, fundamental freedoms and human dignity.

These days of remembrance thus also stand against any further war of aggression, for the necessity of coming to terms with all dictatorships and for the prevention of new ones. The commemoration of the Second World War should therefore - and especially in 2022 - be a commemoration against war as such, as our initiative has set itself the goal.

For the above-mentioned reasons, we propose that point I e of the general order be reworded as follows: "Display of flags and banners with reference to the propagation of the war of aggression".

Coalition “Remembrance Against War”

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*The coalition "Remembrance Against War" was initiated in March 2022 by non-governmental organisations, initiatives and individuals that are mainly working in and with Eastern Europe. Against the backdrop of the current war of aggression by the Russian Federation against Ukraine, it advocates for a reflective and appropriate remembrance of the Second World War and the liberation from German National Socialism and wants to counter propaganda supporting the war of aggression against Ukraine and an abuse of remembrance and history. The manifesto, guidelines, participants and events of the coalition can be found on the website www.gedenken-gegen-krieg.de.*

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