

Address by Prime Minister Andrus Ansip in Klooga, Estonia¹

8 May 2005

This day marks the victory over Nazism and the end of the last great war in Europe.

Although for Estonia, the end of the war does not signify liberation, nevertheless, it does represent an important victory over totalitarianism.

Here in Klooga, we are in a place, which symbolizes the evil and inhumanity of the Nazi ideology.

Nazism was a very difficult burden for all nations over which it ruled. But the Holocaust was the most hideous of the crimes perpetrated by the Nazis.

I am extremely sorry, that this systematic extermination of the Jewish people touches Estonia. It affected both Estonian Jews and those who were transported here to die in the concentration camps established by the Nazis.

All Estonian Governments have condemned crimes against humanity and we will continue to do so, just as do other democratic states.

Last Thursday, the Government of the Republic of Estonia released an official statement, in which it regrets the fact that in cooperation with occupying powers, citizens of the Republic of Estonia also participated in the perpetration of crimes against humanity.

Although these murderers must answer for their crimes as individuals, the Estonian Government continues to do everything possible to expose these crimes.

I apologise for the fact that Estonian citizens could be found among those who participated in the murdering of people or assisted in the perpetration of these crimes.

The Estonian state did not want war. Neither the state nor the people of Estonia entered this war or supported Nazi ideology. Unfortunately, this foreign war was forced upon the Estonian nation, as a result of which, our people suffered severe losses.

We must keep looking towards the future. The system of states and relations of nations built in Europe has no place for Nazism or any another totalitarian ideas. It will no longer be possible to drag the Estonian people into a war at the will of others, or in someone else's interests.

We can all, here in Estonia, devote ourselves to our everyday tasks. We will build our future in a way that events like the Second World War will never repeat themselves.

Today is a day of reconciliation. Let us commemorate unlive lives and think about the future.

¹ Source: Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, available at <http://www.vm.ee/?q=en/node/3457>