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The 80th anniversary of the outbreak of World War II in Warsaw

Speaking at observances marking the 80th anniversary of the outbreak of World War II in Warsaw, Polish President Andrzej Duda said that, "we remember and will remember, being grateful to all those who were fighting and those who sacrificed their lives for a free world."

The president stressed during the main ceremonies at Pilsudskiego Square in Warsaw's downtown on Sunday that WWII took the lives of nearly 80 million people. "Eighty million if we count not only the people killed and murdered but also those who died from hunger, disease and poverty. Three percent of the global population of those times. Looking at Europe, one could say that a big European country and its population disappeared over six years and left an empty land," he said.

President Duda underlined that "mankind has drawn too few conclusions from this terrible lesson," and stressed that ethnic cleansing and genocide still happen.

The Polish head of state recalled that Poland disappeared from the map after the invasion by Nazi Germany was followed by a treacherous attack by the Soviet Union, and stressed that the entire nation was submitted to terror while Polish citizens of Jewish descent were closed in ghettos and and submitted to collective extermination.

"Poland has been left with annihilation camps. One could say that in this way the Polish people have been humiliated by the Germans. They have left their machine of annihilation on our soil. But today, we are its depositories, we have been taking care of it so that it bears witness to the world," he said.



Speaking at observances marking the 80th anniversary of the outbreak of World War II in Warsaw, German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier said that, "this was a German crime." "There is no place in Europe where it would be more difficult for me to speak and raise my voice in my German mother tongue. It is difficult for me to speak out loud to you," Steinmeier said when beginning the speech. The German president said that he had come here being humble and grateful, and stressed that 80 years ago his homeland attacked its neighbour, Poland. My compatriots staged a war which cost the lives of over 50 million people. This was a German crime, he

underlined.



US Vice President Michael Pence said it was a great honour for him to be here on behalf of the US president and the American people. He said that the gathering was taking place in the heart of Warsaw to bear witness to the courage and spirit of a great nation, and the lasting strength of great civilisation.



He stressed he was honoured, on behalf of the American people, including 10 million Americans of Polish descent, to be in Poland, which is free, strong and secure. Michael Pence also stressed that the Polish people have never allowed despair to take control over them, and that they have never renounced their 1,000-year-long history.

Source: president.pl

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