The 1948 UN Convention on the prevention of the crime of genocide and its punishment defines genocide as actions carried out with the aim of destroying completely or partially some national, ethnic, racial or religious group, such actions including:

1) Killing the members of such a group;

2) Inflicting serious bodily or mental harm upon members of such a group;

3) The intentional creation for the members of such a group of living conditions which are meant to result in its complete or partial annihilation;

4) Actions intended to prevent childbirth within such a group;

5) The forced transfer of children from one human group to another.

Seventy-five years ago, in 1932-1933, the people of Ukraine – a country whose territory incorporates 30% of the world’s most fertile black soils – became the victims of a terrible, inhuman crime: the Holodomor (forced Great Famine), which was artificially orchestrated and organized by the totalitarian communist regime of the then USSR. When researchers refer to the Holodomor, they mean the period from April 1932 till November 1933. It was within these 17 months or about 500 days that between 7 and 10 million people perished in Ukraine almost half of which were children.

The Holodomor peaked in the spring of 1933. At that time in Ukraine 17 persons were dying every minute, 1000 every hour and almost 25,000 every day.

The Kharkiv and the Kyiv Regions (today – Poltava, Sumy, Kharkiv, Cherkasy, Kyiv and Zhytomyr Regions) suffered most. They account for 52.8% of the death toll. The death rate in these regions exceeded the average level by 8-9 and more percent. The hunger stretched through the entire Center, South, North and East of contemporary Ukraine. In place of Ukrainians claimed by the Holodomor, members of other ethnic groups were actively transferred by the soviets into Ukraine from other parts of the USSR.

It is impossible to explain, moreover to justify, how so many people could die of hunger in the 20th century in Ukraine – “bread basket of Europe”, a country with strong agricultural traditions where hunger was never registered throughout all of its millennium-long history. Nature itself defies hunger on this soil.

The existing historical data and the one being declassified today by the Ukrainian Security Service from the times of the Soviet KGB/NKVD (Soviet secret police) clearly testify that the Holodomor was precisely directed by the totalitarian communist regime of the then USSR against the Ukrainian nation. This criminal act was executed in two ways: by the confiscation of foodstuffs under the cover of carrying out of the grain procurement plan or by the forced police isolation of villages and regions. Such measures were not taken anywhere else in the then USSR. It was then that the notion of “ghetto” had appeared – long before Hitler, Stalin had introduced the hunger ghettos in Ukraine and in Kuban, the neighboring district of Russia which at that time was inhabited mainly by Ukrainians. Simultaneously with the Holodomor, when millions were dying in Ukraine, the Soviets were engaged in selling abroad large quantities of grain and other agricultural products and foodstuffs – mainly via Ukrainian sea ports. Plentiful proof of this practice is publicly available in the form of trade and other and government statistics. Also at that time, Ukrainian alcohol producing factories were busily using grain to make vodka for export.
The annihilation of religion, private ownership and of ethnic communities constituted the foundation of the theory of Marxist Communism. Hitler, who in the 1920s sympathized with the communists and was supported by the Soviet Bolsheviks, introduced in reality only one of the three postulates of Marxist communism: racial and ethnic genocide. Stalin went much further ahead than Hitler. His genocide of the Ukrainian nation had a total, absolute character and unified three kinds of genocide: religious and cultural; economic; and racial and ethnic. It is vitally important to understand this for the determination of the Ukrainian Holodomor as one of the most heinous crimes against humanity of the 20th century.

The Bolsheviks, after seizing power in the October coup of 1917, destroyed large-scale private land ownership of land in practically no time. But the peasants’ ownership of land and the numerous ethnic communities living in the Russian Empire prevented them from proceeding immediately to the further implementation of Marxist teachings. The Ukrainian ethnic community was the most numerous and the strongest among them and the one most committed to private land ownership into the bargain. Ukrainians appeared to be the obstacle in the way of social restructuring on the basis of the totalitarian communist ideology. Ukraine was the biggest single ethnic part of the Soviet empire and, thus, the most dangerous one for it. It had become evident at the beginning of the 20th century that the Russian tsarist policy of assimilation was a disaster. The Ukrainian population was rapidly growing. Ukrainian peasants bore clear signs of a Ukrainian ethnic identity, the Ukrainian language in the first instance. These signs began to acquire concrete political character. It became especially evident in the course of the national liberation campaign of 1917-1923 in Ukraine when Ukraine made attempt to separate from the Russian Empire falling apart following the examples of Poland and Finland. At that time, according to Trotsky’s account, Ukrainian insurgents, devoid of an elite, elementary organization and communication logistics, held down three times as many Bolshevik forces as the Entente’s entire intervention force.

The war with the Bolsheviks continued in Ukraine much longer than in any other part of the USSR. It stopped only after Lenin took account of the danger of uprisings in conditions where there was a threat of outside intervention, and sanctioned the introduction in Ukraine of the NEP (New Economic Policy) and Ukrainization.

Stalin had started the Ukrainian the Holodomor, by annihilating the national intellectual elite. Out of more than 500 of the most talented Ukrainian poets, thinkers, scientists and writers only 36 were left alive. Entire villages mainly populated by Ukrainians, were forcefully moved from the Kuban’ region to Siberia. The removal of the Poltavskaya village, as well as others, was the first case of the application of the genocidal practice of mass people resettlement in the USSR.

The Bolsheviks did not finish their business and annihilate Ukrainians completely because without its population Ukraine, as “the bread basket” and industrial center, would have lost its economic value for the Soviet government. The complete annihilation of Ukrainians could not also have been guaranteed as Moscow at that time did not control almost one quarter of the Ukrainian population which lived in Western Ukraine, beyond the borders of the USSR (linked to USSR in 1939). That is why it was much more effective for the Kremlin to break Ukraine’s backbone than to annihilate all Ukrainians physically.

However, even after the Holodomor, the Ukrainian “threat” to the Soviet communist empire was permanently before the eyes of its leaders. This fact might explain Georgiy Zhukov’s infamous 1944 decree – fortunately, never implemented – on the resettlement of all Ukrainians to Siberia.

It is true that in Soviet Ukraine the Holodomor was inflicted not only on ethnic Ukrainians but on representatives of other minority ethnic groups historically living in Ukraine – Azov Greeks, Germans, Moldavians, Russians and Jews. Though, certainly, the prevailing majority of the inflicted people were the representatives of the title nation-Ukrainians.

The fact is that the period of Ukrainian People’s Republic and the following brief period of the Ukrainization that Lenin unwillingly sanctioned in the 1920s and at the beginning of the 1930s had substantially changed the world outlook of a considerable part of ethnic non-Ukrainians in Ukraine, especially young people, many of whom began to identify Ukraine as their motherland and to speak the Ukrainian language.

In other words, potentially all the youth of Soviet Ukraine was infected with “bourgeois-nationalist” sentiment, especially the peasants and the intellectual elite. The decree of 14 December 1932 “On grain procurement in Ukraine, the Northern Caucasus and the Western Region,” issued by the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik) and the Council of the People’s Commissars of the USSR, gave an unambiguous order to stop the “incorrectly conducted” policy of Ukrainization in Ukraine. Hence, Holodomor was
directed against the entire population of Ukraine, as well as against ethnic Ukrainians outside Soviet Ukraine (in the Kuban' region of Russia). Today some of the “die hard communist totalitarian imperialistic hawks” try to whitewash the Soviet totalitarian history, to present the inhuman dictator “uncle Joe” Stalin as white pigeon, benefactor, father of the nations colonized by the Russian Empire, almost the “Messiah of the Heavenly Kingdom on Earth”. But historical proof is unbeatable - the Holodomor was caused not by “good intentions”, neither by drought, nor by “miscalculations” in the economic policies of the Soviet authorities, nor by the drive for speedy industrialization the USSR. The Ukrainian Holocaust was a carefully designed, systematic communist-fascist genocide, it was directed first of all at the destruction of the Ukrainian mentality, identity, culture, and the Ukrainian ethnic community as a whole. The Holodomor's main motive was the policy of the totalitarian Stalinist regime aimed at the subjugation of the Ukrainian nation which was striving for its own statehood. The truth is evident in the fact that in 1932-1933, of the entire USSR, it was only in Ukraine and in the areas inhabited by Ukrainians in Kuban' region of Russia that the authorities were undertaking the police operations: the territories where the Holodomor was being organized were surrounded by military screens; people were not allowed to pass through them to save themselves from death by hunger. Entire regions of Ukraine as well as the border of Ukrainian SSR itself were sealed off. Military detachments prevented people from going to other regions of the USSR and from villages and towns – to the big Ukrainian cities. There is plentiful archival evidence of this, as well as the evidences of the eyewitnesses. Nothing similar happened in the Povolzhie region of Russia, nor in any other region of the USSR. That is why the hunger embraced the entire territory of Ukraine within the USSR, but did not touch the neighboring regions of Belarus and Russia. It was in respect of the population of Ukraine that a Communist Party and government Decree was adopted which introduced the requisitioning not only of food or seed grain from the peasants, but of all foodstuffs without difference. Again, nothing like that happened in any other regions of the USSR. The grain procurement process in the Povolzhie region and other territories of the USSR, where the lack of foodstuffs was also felt, was different in principle. Troops were not used to isolate the hunger-struck areas. The organization of international assistance to the “hunger-struck victims of Povolzhie” is widely known. Besides, the Povolzhie hunger and the postwar hunger in Ukraine of late forties were always acknowledged by the USSR, whereas decades after the Holodomor anyone who mentioned the word “hunger” in connection with the years 1932-1933 in Ukraine was sure to be imprisoned. And this was in a situation where the Holodomor was remembered by the entire adult population of Ukraine.

What are the consequences of the Holodomor for Ukraine? The Holodomor was the largest Russian Empire - USSR genocide throughout its entire history. At the beginning of the 20th century Ukraine the rate of population growth in Ukraine was compared with that of China. Today, after a series of demographic catastrophes of the 20th century (hunger of the 1920s and at the end of the late 1940s, the Holodomor of the 1930s, human losses – the greatest in the USSR – numbering many millions during the Second World War), Ukraine has one of the world's highest rates of population decrease. The USSR’s second population census was completed in 1939, but its figures were never published. Evidently, the picture appearing behind the figures was too terrifying. The next census was conducted in the USSR only in 1959. From 1926, that is within 33 years, the number of Ukrainians had increased by only 1.5 millions, while the number of Russians had increased within the same period by 56.9%. This is taking into account the fact that after the Second World War Ukraine acquired a significant influx of Ukrainian population as the result of incorporating into its territory of the Western Ukrainian lands (Volyn', Eastern Halychyna, Transcarpathia and Northern Bukovyna) with about six million people. There is no doubt that between the censuses of 1926 and 1959 there was a nationwide catastrophe in Ukraine. The correlation of the USSR population between 1926 and 1937 (without taking the Ukrainians and the Kazakhs into the account) constituted 119.4%. This figure among the inhabitants of Ukraine was 84.7%, that is, in 1937 there turned out to be 70.9% of inhabitants of Ukraine as against the expected quantity. Such demographic abysses also influence the size of the next generation. The demographic situation in Western Ukraine, which also suffered much from Bolshevik deportations, KGB repressions and resettlements but was not touched by the Holodomor, is significantly better now than in the remaining territory of Ukraine. We must understand this and remember.
This is the truth confirmed by thousands of facts. This is why the Holodomor should without any doubt be qualified as the genocide that it is – the mass annihilation of the people on the basis of their ethnic origin. The Great Famine/Holodomor, organized in Ukraine by the Soviet communist regime, stands alongside the fascist gas chambers in both scale and essence. The Holodomor falls squarely for its definition within the terms of its UN Convention for Prevention of the Crime of Genocide and Punishment. Significantly, that was also the opinion of Raphael Lemkin, the legal scholar who conceived the Genocide Convention. That is why the legislative bodies of increasing number of countries of the world (today – 18) are recognizing the Holodomor as genocide of the Ukrainian nation. The aim of initiating international acknowledgement of the Holodomor of 1932-1933 as a genocide is the condemnation of the crimes of the totalitarian Stalinist Communist regime, the restoration of historical justice, and the payment of due tribute to millions of innocent victims.

The call for the international recognition of Holodomor is not directed against Russia. We are deeply sorry for the numerous innocent Russian victims of the Soviet totalitarian system. We are not trying to declassify the earlier virtually unknown truth about the soviet communist crimes in Ukraine (or elsewhere in the post-soviet space) out of a desire for revenge or to make a partisan political point. We know that the Russian people were also among Stalin’s “experimentation” foremost victims. Apportioning blame to their living descendents is the last thing on our minds. Our only wish is for this crime to be understood for what it truly was. We call on all the world public for solidarity to support Ukraine in this undertaking which is cardinally important for the entire humankind civilization.

By initiating recognition of the Holodomor Ukraine is drawing attention to the fact that even today hunger is being used as a weapon against people and is thus striving to prevent this shameful phenomenon from spreading further in the world. On this basis, on 14 May 2003 the Verkhovna Rada (Parliament) of Ukraine recognized the Holodomor as an act of genocide against the Ukrainian nation. On 28 November 2006 it passed the corresponding law “On Recognition of Holodomor of 1932-1933 in Ukraine.” The President of Ukraine has initiated the introduction of criminal responsibility for Holodomor and Holocaust denial in Ukraine. On 1 November 2007 the 34th General Conference of UNESCO session, which incorporates 193 countries of the world, unanimously adopted the Resolution on “Remembrance of Victims of the Great Famine (Holodomor) in Ukraine”.

Ukraine will also pursue the goal of the recognition of the Holodomor as genocide of Ukrainians by the world community of nations, as well as of condemnation of these actions by the totalitarian Soviet Communist regime at the 63d UN General Assembly Session. Such actions will serve as a safety precaution against any speculation on tragic events in history.

Ukraine is grateful to the Australians, Parliamentarians and the Government of this country for paying the remembrance tribute to millions of Ukrainians who perished in the Holodomor. Just recently (22.02.2008) the Motion, introduced by the Parliamentary Secretary for Multicultural Affairs Mr. Laurie Ferguson and fully supported by the opposition was considered in the House of Representatives on recognition of Holodomor as genocide of Ukrainians and supporting the possible Ukrainian Draft Resolution of the subject at the UN GA session. The Victorian Parliament Upper House on 27.02.2008 debated and accepted the same kind of Motion (Motion moved by the Victorian Shadow Planning Minister, Mr. Matthew Guy, MP). Ukraine is profoundly grateful and
acknowledges the significance of the similar 2003 motion moved by Senator Bill Heffernan in the Australian Senate.

A decision in favor of the world condemnation of the Great Famine, the Holodomor, as a genocide is historically, politically and psychologically important for Ukrainians themselves. This is the turning point which corrects falsified history, releases the people from the fear and inferiority complexes “inoculated” into them by Stalinism and reminds them of the terrible and tragic pages of their past. It teaches the importance of preserving one’s dignity and remaining independent and responsible for one’s own country.

Unless we learn our lessons from history – we shall be doomed to repeat its bad pages! So we must not forget! By acknowledging what had occurred, hopefully, we shall never allow it to happen again anywhere.

Ukraine remembers – the world acknowledges!

Canberra, Australia

For reference:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nationality</th>
<th>1926</th>
<th>1937</th>
<th>1937 in % as compared to 1926</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Russians</td>
<td>77 791 124</td>
<td>93 933 065</td>
<td>120,7 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukrainians</td>
<td>31 194 976</td>
<td>26 421 212</td>
<td>84,7 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belarusians</td>
<td>4 738 923</td>
<td>4 874 061</td>
<td>102,9 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uzbeks</td>
<td>3 955 238</td>
<td>4 550 532</td>
<td>115 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tatars</td>
<td>3 029 995</td>
<td>3 793 413</td>
<td>125,2 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kazakhs</td>
<td>3 968 289</td>
<td>2 862 468</td>
<td>72,1 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jews</td>
<td>2 672 499</td>
<td>2 715 106</td>
<td>101,6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Azerbaijanans</td>
<td>1 706 605</td>
<td>2 134 648</td>
<td>125,1 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgians</td>
<td>1 821 184</td>
<td>2 097 069</td>
<td>115,1 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armenians</td>
<td>1 568 197</td>
<td>1 968 721</td>
<td>125,5 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>