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PACE Condemns 'Russian Aggression' in Ukraine

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Mikhail Sokolov / TASS

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) has condemned "Russian aggression" in eastern Ukraine
in a historic ruling.

The council's resolution claims that Russia's actions undermined "stability and security on the continent" and violated Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. The assembly has refused to recognize Russia's annexation of the Crimean peninsula in 2014.

Iryana Gerashchenko,
the first deputy chairman of Ukraine's Verkhovna Rada,
called the
resolution "historic."

"It is very important that the assembly changed the wording of the resolution

to specifically recognize “Russian aggression,” she wrote on Facebook.

“The so-called Luhansk and Donetsk People's Republics are supported by Russia and are not legitimate,” she said.

PACE also ignored Kremlin denials that Russia had no military presence in Ukraine, calling for Moscow to withdraw its troops from the country's Donbass region.

Kiev was also condemned in the resolution for its failure to follow “international democratic standards.” PACE called on the Ukrainian government to promote media pluralism and independent political opposition.

Russia is currently boycotting PACE after the the organizatio n stripped Russia of its voting rights in 2014 for its role in the Ukrainian crisis.

The Kremlin labeled the move “Russophobic discrimination,” pledging to only return to the organization as an “equal partner.”

PACE unites parliament deputies from 47 European countries that meet four times a year to give recommendations on human rights and other issues. The body also appoints judges to the European Court of Human Rights.

The Ukrainian conflict has killed more than 9,300 people since it began in April 2014. Almost one and a half million people have left their homes as a result of the conflict, PACE said.

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