



Arkadiusz MULARCZYK
Member of the European Parliament

Brussels, 15/10/2026

Mr. Friedrich MERZ
Federal Chancellor
of the Federal Republic of Germany

Dear Federal Chancellor,

Why is Germany co-organising discussions on reparatory justice for African countries while showing no comparable willingness to engage with Poland – its neighbour and partner in the European Union – and why has the German federal budget for 2027 made no provision for compensation for surviving victims of the Second World War in Poland and Central Europe?

According to Reuters, on 23 September 2026, Germany, France and Ghana co-organised a meeting on reparatory justice on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly. Ghana's Foreign Minister identified Germany as one of the countries expressing a willingness to return looted cultural property.

I support the right of African nations to seek justice for historical wrongs. However, the willingness to engage in dialogue on responsibility, restitution and compensation should also extend to the consequences of Germany's aggression against and occupation of Poland during the Second World War. Justice must not depend on the nationality of the victims.

The most urgent issue is the situation of the surviving victims. There are still people living in Poland who experienced German terror, deportation, forced labour and the loss of their loved ones, yet have never received adequate compensation. Every additional year of delay means that more of these victims pass away without having seen justice.



The German daily *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* also drew attention to the dramatic situation of these individuals in an article published on 14 October 2026. Journalist Stefan Locke described the plight of surviving Polish victims of the German occupation, including a 94-year-old former forced labourer who lives on a pension of just PLN 2,900 (EUR 670) per month. The woman, who is battling cancer, has been forced to seek financial assistance because her pension is insufficient to cover all her living expenses, medical treatment and care. Her story is one of many examples demonstrating how Polish victims continue to suffer the consequences of German war crimes to this day.

It is particularly astonishing that, as reported by *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, the draft federal budget for 2027 prepared by your government once again makes no provision for the long-promised humanitarian gesture towards the surviving Polish victims of the German occupation. According to the Polish-German Reconciliation Foundation, approximately 50,000 such individuals were still alive in December 2025, whereas today their number has fallen to just over 40,000. Many are over 90 years old and suffer from serious health problems. The words quoted by the German media, which representatives of the Foundation hear from the victims - **“Germany is waiting for us to die”** - should serve as a particularly painful warning to the authorities of the Federal Republic of Germany. Every additional month without a decision to provide meaningful assistance means that more victims of German crimes pass away without receiving the compensation they deserve.

As a Member of the European Parliament and the initiator and chairman of the team responsible for preparing the *Report on the Losses Sustained by Poland as a Result of German Aggression and Occupation during the Second World War, 1939–1945*, published on 1 September 2022, I wish to recall that the report estimated Poland’s losses at more than PLN 6.2 trillion, equivalent to approximately EUR 1.3 trillion. Behind this figure lie millions of lives lost, the devastation of our country, and the looting and destruction of its cultural heritage.

I would therefore like to address three questions to you, Federal Chancellor:

1. *Is the Federal Government prepared to enter into a dialogue with the Government of the Republic of Poland on reparatory justice for the consequences of German aggression and occupation between 1939 and 1945, including Poland’s claims for reparations?*
2. *Will the Federal Government put forward a concrete proposal for individual compensation for the surviving Polish victims of German crimes and allocate adequate financial resources in the 2027 federal budget to ensure that this assistance reaches the victims during their lifetimes?*
3. *Is the Federal Government prepared to agree with Poland on a joint plan to identify and return cultural property looted during the German occupation, including provenance research and access to German archives?*



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Member of the European Parliament

The differences between the positions of Poland and Germany regarding reparations, compensation and redress should not prevent dialogue on reparatory justice or concrete action on behalf of surviving victims and the restitution of cultural property. At the same time, individual compensation payments and the return of looted cultural heritage must not be treated as substitutes for reparations or presented as a final settlement of Poland's claims.

Genuine reconciliation requires concrete action. Germany's willingness to discuss historical injustices should also be reflected in its relations with Poland. It is unacceptable to declare responsibility for historical injustices on the international stage while leaving unanswered the claims and desperate appeals of the surviving victims of the German occupation in Poland.

I request a written response addressing each of the three questions set out above within 30 days of receipt of this letter. I also express my willingness to meet in order to discuss concrete opportunities for initiating dialogue and taking action on behalf of Polish victims.

Yours sincerely,

Arkadiusz MULARCZYK

Member of the European Parliament

Former Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Poland

*Former Government Plenipotentiary for Compensation for Damage Caused
by German Aggression and Occupation in 1939–1945*

Copy to:

Michael McGrath - European Commissioner for Democracy, Justice, the Rule of Law and Consumer Protection



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