

ADDRESS
by H.E. Ambassador of Russia to Israel
Mr. Anatoly Viktorov
at the reception on the occasion
of Defender of the Fatherland Day

February 20, 2025, Sergey Courtyard, Jerusalem

Dear guests,

Your Excellencies, colleagues,

Comrade officers, representatives of the offices of the military attachés,

Dear compatriots, friends,

To my great regret, I will begin my address with heavy words. Today is a dark day for all the Israeli people, a time of sorrow and grief. The bodies of four hostages were returned to Israel from the Gaza Strip. On behalf of the Russian Embassy and my own behalf, I would like to express my sincere condolences to the bereaved families and loved ones of the victims, as well as to the leadership and all citizens of Israel.

I ask for a minute of silence.

Friends,

I am pleased to welcome you to the reception on the occasion of Defender of the Fatherland Day celebrated in Russia on February 23. This day takes on special meaning because the year 2025 has been declared the Year of the Defender of the Fatherland in our country to commemorate the 80th anniversary of Victory in the Great Patriotic War.

This day symbolizes the importance of the selfless work of our military to protect the sovereignty and ensure the prosperity of Russia. It unites all who cherish the past, present and future of our beloved Motherland.

Patriotism and unity of the people are the basis of the glorious thousand-year history of our country. They are firmly connected with the state and its reliable defenders – the army and navy. To this day, the Armed Forces are one of the pillars

of national security, the progressive development of Russia, the peaceful and calm life of its citizens.

We express our sincere words of gratitude to the veterans of the Great Patriotic War. We will always remember that because of their unparalleled courage and bravery we exist. Let us never forget that 80 years ago, it was the soldiers of the victorious multinational Red Army who won the Great Victory, crushed the Hitlerite war machine, saved the world from the brown plague and the horrors of the Holocaust. They defended the right to life and freedom of the peoples of not only their own country, but also many other states. Their feat is a great example for the present and future generations. A deep bow to them, heartfelt gratitude and eternal glory!

Dear friends,

Today we are responsible for the future of our Fatherland. Russian soldiers continue the just cause of their fathers, grandfathers and great-grandfathers, and for them this feeling has a special meaning. We pay tribute to all who, on their hearts with weapons in hand, stand guard over the interests of the Motherland in the zone of the special military operation. To those who courageously oppose the proponents of neo-Nazi ideology and falsifiers of history, who, with the support of Western countries, like notorious terrorists, brutally kill peaceful people, shell Russian civilian facilities, try to destroy everything Russian and all Russians, and rage around the monuments of our common heroic past that still remain in Ukraine. We thank the devotees and civil activists who support Russian soldiers and help them. We believe in the invincible power of our defenders. We will protect our country from any threats to its security. All goals of the special military operation will be achieved.

I am sure that the World Majority treats this with due understanding.

Dear friends,

The world order is undergoing radical changes, and we are at the forefront of the struggle to ensure that Russia has a worthy place in a more just international

system. However, all those interested in the formation of a new world have to spend a lot of energy to overcome the destructive actions of opponents clinging to their elusive monopoly, neocolonialist power dominance and hegemony. All these efforts could be directed with much greater efficiency at solving common problems.

For our part, we will continue the foreign policy line defined by President Vladimir Putin, which is based on the generally recognized norms of international law, primarily on the UN Charter in its entirety and the interdependence of its provisions, as well as the enshrined fundamental principle of sovereign equality of states. Together with numerous like-minded partners, we will continue to contribute to strengthening the foundations of multipolarity, particularly through enhancing constructive cooperation with all interested foreign partners. We will continue to work consistently with our Israeli colleagues on all aspects of bilateral relations, the regional and international agenda within the generally constructive dialogue that has developed between us. We will make every effort to resolve acute humanitarian issues, promote a political and diplomatic settlement of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict on a well-known international legal basis, and establish peace and stability in the Middle East.

Dear friends,

Congratulations on Defender of the Fatherland Day!

I wish you all good health, prosperity, and success in your good deeds!

Thank you for your attention.