

ADDRESS
by H. E. Ambassador of Russia to Israel
Mr. Anatoly Viktorov
at the reception on the occasion
of the 79th Anniversary of Victory in the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945

May 9, 2024, Herzliya

Dear colleagues,

Dear guests, friends,

I congratulate you on the Great Victory Day. There is no other day on the calendar that would combine the triumph of patriotism, sincere pride in the Motherland and ancestors, but also endless grief of the severity of irreparable losses. It is indeed a “Holiday with Tears in Our Eyes.”

On this significant day, we pay tribute of deep respect and gratitude to all those whose unprecedented feats on the battlefields and selfless work on the home front made it possible to crush the Nazi invaders, defend the freedom and independence of our country, save many peoples from extermination and enslavement, and put an end to the tragedy of the Holocaust.

We have always remembered the contribution of all allied forces to the common Victory over Nazism.

We highly value and honor the feat of the Chinese people in the fight against Japanese militarism. We remember the 35 million Chinese soldiers who died on the battlefields and were wounded during World War II.

I would like to ask you for a minute of silence to honor the memory of all those fallen in the Great Patriotic War and the Second World War.

Over the years, fewer and fewer veteran heroes remain with us, but their feat will never fade. Our children and grandchildren will always remember those who gave them life, who fell in battle or lost their lives as a result of the crime of genocide committed by the Nazis and their accomplices on the territory of the Soviet Union.

We know that lessons must be learned from history. We remember well that the main reason for the outbreak of World War II was the man-hate and aggressive

essence of Nazism, the bearers of which came to power in European countries in a completely democratic way. Western “democracies” tried then, as unfortunately it is repeated today, to solve their own security problems at the expense of the security and sovereignty of other states and peoples. Our country’s proposals to counter the threats that existed at that time remained without an adequate response.

We paid a monstrous price for the political intrigues of the West – 27 million dead, of which 18 million were civilians. These figures hide the great grief that came to almost every Soviet family, and the torment of those barbarously killed in Nazi death camps, the residents of besieged Leningrad tortured to death by starvation, the residents of Belarussian Khatyn burned alive by Hitler’s accomplices, and the Jews of Lvov massacred by Bandera’s followers. This list is endless.

It is clear to us that Nazism in all its manifestations is an absolute evil that has taken root in modern times and must be fought until it is completely eradicated. In 1945, it seemed that Nazism would never again be able to raise its head. However, today we see that historical truth is recklessly dissected and becomes a victim of false political narratives, and Russia has become the object of cheap fabrications and labels. We are witnessing that much of the ideology of those who were obsessed with the delusional theory of their exceptionalism is again being tried to be put into service. Nazi symbols and slogans from World War II times are openly used. Moreover, the imaginary confidence in their own global superiority allowed some, as in the past, to cross out international treaties and agreements designed to stop the slide of a fragile world towards a repetition of tragedy.

Today, our soldiers continue the just cause of our fathers, grandfathers and great-grandfathers, honorably fulfilling the mission to eradicate neo-Nazism and eliminate threats to the security of Russia. I am sure that the World Majority treats this with due understanding.

I would like to recall that this year marks the 80th anniversary of the beginning of the liberation of Europe from Nazism. The Red Army freed ten European countries from the Nazi yoke. During the offensive operations of the Soviet and allied troops, prisoners of numerous concentration camps were rescued. Soldiers of

the Red Army liberated the main Nazi “death factories” - Majdanek, Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka, Auschwitz. The irretrievable losses alone in the battles for the peaceful future of European peoples and the liberation of European Jewry from the horrors of the Holocaust amounted to about one million Soviet soldiers and officers. This feat cannot be forgotten or distorted.

Dear friends,

The Great Victory is well remembered in Israel. It is known that May 9 was established as the holiday – Victory Day over Nazism by the relevant law adopted in 2017. We will never forget about the 500 thousand Jews who fought heroically in the ranks of the Red Army.

The memory of the tragic and heroic years of World War II and the Great Patriotic War is our common heritage, which should not be subject to any fluctuations in the foreign policy situation. Together, we will continue to do everything to ensure that neo-Nazism, xenophobia, racism and anti-Semitism cannot once again bring the fragile world to the brink of new global catastrophes.

Once again, Happy Holiday – Happy Victory Day!