

ADDRESS
by the Ambassador of Russia to Israel,
A. Viktorov,
at the event marking the Day of Victory over Japanese Militarism
and the End of World War II

September 3, 2026, Netanya

Distinguished colleagues and compatriots,

Dear friends,

I welcome everyone gathered here today to solemnly commemorate the Day of Victory over Militarist Japan and the end of World War II. Eighty-one years ago, an end was put to the greatest tragedy in human history — a tragedy that claimed tens of millions of lives.

While Nazi Germany was carrying out the extermination of Jews and genocide against the entire Soviet people — threatening the whole world with enslavement — in the East, militarist Japan was likewise pursuing a policy of misanthropy, including plans for the large-scale use of bacteriological weapons to annihilate entire peoples.

The Red Army's powerful and lightning-fast offensive in August and September of 1945 saved millions of people from genocide and forced the Japanese invaders to sign the Act of Military Surrender.

The main burden of the Second World War fell upon the shoulders of the peoples of the Soviet Union. They played a decisive role in the defeat of Hitler's Germany, liberated Europe from the Nazi plague alongside their allies, including Yugoslav partisans, and saved European Jewry from extermination in the flames of the Holocaust. The Soviet Union was able to concentrate its efforts on this front because China bore the brunt of Japanese militarism and tied down the enemy's main ground forces. We also remember the courageous struggle of Vietnamese partisans against the Japanese occupiers and colonizers.

At the cost of enormous human losses, our countries together defeated a common enemy and halted Japanese military aggression in the Far East. By some estimates, the

Second World War claimed the lives of approximately 27 million Soviet citizens. Meanwhile, the heroic resistance against Japanese aggression starting in 1931 cost the Chinese people about 37 million lives. We recall these harrowing figures with a heavy heart.

As time passes, revisionist and revanchist sentiments are intensifying in a number of countries, including Germany and Japan. It is worth recalling that the aftermath of World War II established Japan's new borders, specifically placing all the Kuril Islands under our country's jurisdiction. This decision was enshrined in agreements reached by the Allied Powers and in the UN Charter. In this context, the anti-Russian outbursts by Japanese authorities regarding Russian President Vladimir Putin's visit to the South Kuril island of Iturup this August provoke both indignation and suspicion. Russia's sovereignty over the South Kurils is beyond doubt. Visits by the Russian leadership to the sovereign territory of our country cannot be a subject of discussion with independent foreign states.

The victory in World War II was of world-historical significance and laid the foundation for the modern global order; the United Nations remains the cornerstone of this order, serving — despite current challenges — as a unique and indispensable platform for dialogue. Russia consistently advocates for strengthening the central and coordinating role of the UN in global affairs.

While memorials and graves of Soviet liberator soldiers are desecrated and even destroyed on a massive scale in a number of countries — alongside the erection of monuments and "pantheons" honoring the accomplices of Nazi criminals—Russia, together with its friends and allies, will continue to counter attempts to diminish or distort the USSR's role in World War II and to substitute historical facts with false interpretations. Preserving the truth about the war is our shared duty to those who gave their lives for peace and freedom.

We bow our heads in memory of the heroic deeds of all the fallen.

Eternal glory to the outstanding warriors who fought and triumphed in the struggle for our future. We take pride in their courage and valor.

Thank you for your attention.