

Introductory Statement

International Public Forum

“Preserving the Memory of the Second World War and the Great Patriotic War”

5th Session: “PROTECT THE TRUTH ABOUT THE VICTORY!”

Dear Friends!

I am glad to welcome you to the opening of the International Public Forum “Preserving the Memory of the Second World War and the Great Patriotic War”. The Eurasian Peoples’ Assembly, together with its partners (the Eurasian Academy of Television and Radio and the Association of Researchers of the Russian Society, ARRS-XXI) holds the Forum for the fifth time.

The First Forum was held as part of the XV Sevastopol International Festival of Documentaries and TV Programs VICTORIOUS TOGETHER in May 2019, the next Forum took place at the Baku Slavic University in October 2019. It was supported by the Ministry of culture of Azerbaijan and the Russian Centre for science and culture. In February 2020 the Forum was held in Yalta as part of the International scientific conference “Yalta-1945: Lessons of History”, and on June 17, 2020 experts from 15 countries participated in an online Forum.

The key theme of the Forum is historical memory and the truth about our common history, about the heroic feat of the peoples united in opposing fascism and defending the Fatherland. The Forum aims to draw attention to the lessons of the Second World War, promote active resistance to attempts to revive fascism and Nazism, and attract attention of the international community to an unbiased and objective study of history.

It is significant that the current Forum opens on the Day of the 75th anniversary of the end of the Second World War. On September 2, 1945, Japan officially signed the act of unconditional surrender. However, the news of the end of the Second World War spread widely the next day - September 3. It was the first truly peaceful day for all countries after five years of war.

The Second World War had an immeasurable impact on the fate of mankind. 62 States participated in it. (80 per cent of the world's population). Military operations were

conducted on the territory of 40 States. 110 million people were mobilized into the armed forces. Total human losses reached 60-65 million people.

The Second World War affected all the people of the Earth, and its end is a date on a planetary scale. Today, it is very important to preserve the historical truth about this period of human history, and to do everything to ensure that such tragedies do not happen again.

75 years have passed, but the truth about the war is not fully revealed. Many prefer to keep silent or retouch it, justifying the choice made then. It is the historical duty of all of us to reveal the truth about the war. Declassified documents that reveal the facts of the crimes of the Nazis and their minions against humanity should become available to historians and the public. We must unite our efforts to defend the sacred memory of our ancestors, to prevent the pejorative attempts of certain political forces to shield the true perpetrators of the war, and to downplay the role of the USSR in the defeat of Nazism.

The First International Public Forum started here, in Sevastopol, supported by the authorities of Sevastopol and the Republic of Crimea. The Federation Council and local authorities also supported Yalta Forum 2019, held at the Livadia Palace. The return of the Forum to the Crimean land a year later is a landmark event that shows the desire of society and the authorities to preserve the memory of the values of unity and friendship of peoples, their decisive role in the Great Victory.

It is interesting, that during the Yalta Conference in 1945, the Vorontsov Palace was assigned as a residence to Churchill. Once again, as it was in May 2019 in the Livadia Palace, we hold the Forum in a historical space that reminds us that the future is built not by struggle, but by wise decisions.

I would like to sincerely thank the leadership of the Republic of Crimea for the opportunity to hold the Forum in the Vorontsov Palace. As it was 75 years ago, the call for peace and mutual understanding between peoples, recorded in the Livadia Declaration on the maintenance of peace and security, adopted at the Forum in February of this year, flies out of Crimea again, breaking through the information blockade.

From session to session, the Forum confirms the relevance of the topic in a difficult modern situation. Historians, scientists, documentary filmmakers, public and political figures from India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Uzbekistan, Georgia and Ecuador take part in the discussion of the causes and lessons of the Second World War, the importance of attracting attention of the general public of the CIS and Baltic countries to the issues of preserving historical memory, countering attempts to rehabilitate Nazism.

Despite the difficulties of the pandemic, the Head of the Republic of Crimea Sergey Aksenov supports the 5th Session of the Forum “Protect the Truth about the Victory!” The Session solves the problem of finding new practices for creating constructive and creative images of the Victory over fascism that help strengthen mutual understanding and peaceful relations between countries and peoples.

Unfortunately, the lessons of history are learned very slowly. Despite the colossal victims of the Second World War, decades later local wars and terrorist acts are unleashed again, explosions are heard, people are killed - and, worst of all, children.

September 3 marks the Day of Solidarity in the Fight against Terrorism. Everyone remembers Beslan in 2004. The attack at the school did not leave anyone indifferent. The memorial date has become a symbol of solidarity between the state and society in the fight against terrorism, and today, September 3, we remember the victims of all terrorist acts.

Dear friends, the Eurasian Peoples' Assembly aims not only to actively counteract the distortion of the history of the Second World War and the Great Patriotic War and preserve the historical memory of those heroes who defended the world at the cost of their own lives.

Based on the diversity of cultures and peoples, their spiritual and moral foundations, and the common sense of the self-worth of human life, we support and promote public and state initiatives aimed at preserving world peace.

The International Public Forum will continue to develop as a practical platform for organizing a set of measures aimed at preserving historical and spiritual lessons about the greatest tragedy of the twentieth century, forming constructive and creative

images of its memory, contributing to strengthening mutual understanding and peaceful relations between countries and peoples.

Our common task is to establish peace on the planet with the whole world!