

Great Speech by the President of Russia
Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin
at
Victory Day Military Parade at Red Square in
Moscow, May 9, 2018.

President of Russia Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin: Citizens of Russia,

Veterans, soldiers and seamen, sergeants and master sergeants, warrant officers and chief warrant officers, officers, generals and admirals,
Congratulations on Victory Day!

This holiday has always been and will always be the dearest, most sacred day for each family, for all our huge country, a day of national pride and eternal unfailing memory.

Seventy-three years ago, the Great Patriotic War ended, Nazism was crushed and its atrocities, outrages and barbarity were terminated, and plans for world domination were defeated.

The defeat of the Nazis was a tremendous triumphant Victory. This long-awaited word immediately circled the planet. All countries, all people back then understood that the outcome of World War II was determined by the Soviet Union, that this great sacrificial feat was achieved by our soldiers and our people.

It gained Victory at the cost of the hardest, irreplaceable losses; it defended the honour and independence of our homeland thanks to unparalleled courage on the frontlines and on the home front. However, attempts are made today to cross out this deed of the people who saved Europe and the world from slavery, from the horrors of the Holocaust, to distort the events of the war, to bury the true heroes in oblivion, to forge, rewrite and corrupt history itself.

We will never let this happen. **We must cherish the memory of the courage of the warriors who gave their lives, of all our soldiers and the brave fighters of the Second Front, of the contribution made by the anti-Hitler coalition countries, of the brotherhood-in-arms of those who stood up against Nazism.**

We will always take pride in the fact that the Soviet people stood its ground and did not yield to the cruel enemy, while some countries preferred the disgrace of capitulation, hypocritical compromise or direct cooperation with the Nazis.

Our people fought to the death. No other country repelled such an invasion, evacuated under enemy fire millions of people and thousands

of factories, which practically off the wheels started manufacturing equipment and munitions for the front.

The impossible was achieved. Nobody thought of themselves and everyone worked heroically, including women and children. For the Motherland, for Victory. For those who were defending our country, their families in the thick of the war.

The courage of our warriors is immeasurable. All of them, from a private to a general, fought in the cold and the heat, in small and large battlefields. Each military line was part of the Fatherland, and for that reason, every one of them was the most important.

Our troops won great victories in the decisive Battles of Moscow and Stalingrad, in the battles near Kursk and on the Dnieper, broke the siege of Leningrad and liberated European capitals. They took Berlin in the conclusive assault.

Their background did not matter throughout that time: where they came from, what their ethnicity or religion was, which region of the vast country they lived in before the war, and whether they were drafted to join the army or volunteered for the front.

Everyone had one Motherland. Everyone fought as much as they could, until the last round, until the last drop of blood.

May 9 unites generations through a history of courage. Each family has its own heroes, who live on in our hearts. They are with us in the ranks of the „Immortal Regiment.“

We bow to the cherished memory of all those who did not come back from the war, to the sons, daughters, fathers, mothers, grandfathers, husbands, wives, sisters, fellow-soldiers, relatives and friends. We mourn the veterans who passed away.

Let us observe a minute of silence.

(A minute of silence.)

Friends,

In June 1941, war entered every home, separating loved ones, many of them – forever. It orphaned and bereaved hundreds of thousands of children, destroying hopes and plans, incinerating towns and villages.

War is always a challenge to life itself and to all the best it offers.

We remember the tragedies of the two world wars; the lessons of history do not let us „go blind“. New threats bear the same old ugly features: selfishness and intolerance, aggressive nationalism and claims to exclusiveness.

We are aware of the seriousness of these threats. It is important for all countries, all humankind to realise that peace is very fragile, and its stability is enhanced by our common commitment to hear, trust and respect each other.

Russia is open for dialogue on all issues related to ensuring global security; it is ready for a constructive equal partnership for the sake of agreement, peace and progress on the planet.

Esteemed veterans,

Our gratitude to you knows no limits; our hearts speak about it now. A military parade will be held in honour of your services to the Fatherland. Your lives, scorched by the war, are an eternal example for all generations. We bow to your fierce loyalty to the Motherland.

We are honoured to be your heirs. We understand the extent of this responsibility and we will never let you down.

Pride in your deed makes us stronger. Now a new generation of victors is in the ranks, and they will march through the country's main square.

We will always follow your testament, your traditions. We will continue to work hard, to achieve success for the sake of Russia's prosperity and power. The light of your victories, your bravery and your words will encourage us along this road.

Happy holiday! Congratulations on the day of the Great Victory! Hooray!