

Belarus' path: patriotism, intellect, progress

On May 8th, Alexander Lukashenko, the President of the Republic of Belarus, delivers State of the Nation Address to the Belarusian people and the National Assembly at the House of Representatives → 4-9

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During the solemn parade in Minsk to honour Victory Day

Let's bow to those great years!

President of Belarus' speech at Victory Monument wreath laying ceremony

**Dear veterans!
Dear fellow countrymen
and foreign guests!**

Today, we're celebrating with you a dear and sacred holiday for all of us — Victory Day! It's a day of heroism and fame for all those Soviet people who protected their native land and liberated humanity from Nazism.

67 years separate us from those May days when the red banner of freedom, washed with the blood of millions of heroes, was raised over the Reichstag by Soviet Army soldiers.

Since then, cannons have never again thundered upon our land. Shells haven't exploded, the stoves of concentrated camps have not blazed and people have not died under bombardment. Generations have been raised without awareness of the horrors of war.

We highly appreciate the contribution of the states which joined the

anti-Hitler coalition and of all those which opposed Fascism, bringing Victory. However, we shouldn't forget that it was the Soviet Union which played the decisive role in destroying Nazism.

We must remember the strength, courage and determination of the millions of ordinary Soviet people who fought the enemy without sparing themselves. They fought for each town and village. They created a people's army of partisans and undergrounders. They worked in factories to the point of exhaustion and fainted with hunger — in the fields while growing wheat for bread and while forging the weaponry of Liberation.

Belarus played a vital role in this irreconcilable opposition of Good and Evil. The myth of the invincibility of Hitler's military armada was dispelled on our land. Our heroic opposition to the enemy began in

the first minutes of that fatal June dawn of 1941 and lasted until the complete expulsion of the occupying force.

One of the largest military operations in history — Bagration — was deployed on our territory, uniting the forces of the Soviet Army and the partisan movement. It cleared Belarus of invaders while opening the path for Europe's liberation.

The legacy of those fiery years is forever imprinted in the nation's genetic memory. Today, near the Eternal Flame, we again feel their furious struggle and the grief of loss. We again feel the unconquerable spirit of those soldiers who defended Brest Fortress and the Dnieper Line. We feel the courage of the heroes of the Ushachi breakthrough and Minsk underground, and the pain of Khatyn's burnt children and of the thousands of prisoners who were held in ghettos and death

camp. We remember the exultation of Minsk's citizens in July 1944, as they welcomed Soviet soldiers with tears in their eyes.

Let's bow to those great years. Let's commemorate those who perished calmly, according to Slavonic custom. May those heroes who liberated the Homeland enjoy eternal fame and may eternal disgrace fall on those aggressors and traitors who destroyed our nation!

Let's honour the memory of those who died in battle and who became victims of Nazi genocide, with a minute of silence.

(A minute of silence.)

Dear friends!

Analysing the lessons of WWII, we can draw a major conclusion: we must do everything in our power to never allow the tragedy to be repeated.

Seven decades ago, in the face of

the threat of total destruction, world leaders united their efforts for the sake of humanity, leaving aside the polarity of political systems.

In January 1942, the Big Four — the Soviet Union, the UK, the USA and China — joined 22 other countries in signing the Declaration of United Nations, proclaiming that 'complete victory over the common enemy is a necessary condition for the rule of human rights and justice, both in our native lands and elsewhere.'

This historical example of joint struggle against the inhuman ideology of Fascism should be an orienting point for contemporary politicians. However different our opinions, we all, who have the trust of the people, should have something that is above subjective discrepancies and short-term expectations. We should aim to build a fair and safe world order.

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