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**Elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia
and related intolerance****Letter dated 23 January 2024 from the Permanent Representative
of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the
Secretary-General**

I have the honour to transmit herewith the statement of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation in connection with the proposal of the Democrats for a Strong Bulgaria party members on the Municipal Council of Plovdiv, Bulgaria, to dismantle the “Alyosha” monument to the Soviet soldier-liberator who fought against Nazism.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 69.

(Signed) V. Nebenzya



Annex to the letter dated 23 January 2024 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement by the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation in connection with the initiative to dismantle the “Alyosha” monument to the Soviet soldier-liberator in Plovdiv, Bulgaria

The Deputies express their extreme indignation at the provocative and cynical proposal by members of the Plovdiv Municipal Council from the Democrats for a Strong Bulgaria (DSB) party to dismantle the “Alyosha” monument to the Soviet soldier-liberator by the end of 2024.

The DSB party, known for its virulent Russophobia, is a consistent supporter of Bulgaria’s pro-Western orientation and its active participation in all NATO adventures. It was the government of DSB party founder Ivan Kostov who gave access to Bulgaria’s airspace for NATO air strikes against Yugoslavia in 1999, despite numerous protests by Bulgarian citizens.

This, the latest reckless stunt by the representatives of the DSB party, is a blatant demonstration of disdain for the history of their country, a despicable attempt to desecrate the common historical memory of our fraternal peoples, a frenetic and desperate desire to belittle the heroic feat of Soviet soldiers and the decisive contribution of the USSR and the Soviet people to the fight against Nazism during the Second World War.

This barbaric initiative, if supported by the Plovdiv Municipal Council, will bring indelible shame both to the initiators and to the legislative and executive authorities of the city, and will clearly demonstrate the inadequacy and political short-sightedness of the Plovdiv authorities.

Bulgarians are well aware that the inspiration for “Alyosha”, a monument erected on the initiative of the Bulgarian people, was Red Army soldier Alexei Ivanovich Skurlatov, a holder of two Orders of the Red Star, a native of Altai, who in 1944 participated in the restoration of telephone communication between Sofia and Plovdiv. In August 1982, Alexei Ivanovich Skurlatov was welcomed in Plovdiv with great honours as a national hero and was awarded the title of honorary citizen of the city.

The barbaric war unleashed in the West against the monuments of the Soviet era is evidence of the inferiority and helplessness of the current Western so-called elites, who regularly demonstrate total incompetence and incapacity in addressing key issues on the domestic and international agenda.

We urge the members of the Plovdiv Municipal Council not to go along with the provocateurs and to make the necessary efforts to preserve cultural and historical monuments and other objects of material and spiritual culture in accordance with the agreement between the Government of the Russian Federation and the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria on cooperation in the field of culture, education and science.

We express confidence that, as in the past, the residents not only of Plovdiv, but also of Bulgaria as a whole, will raise their voices in defence of the “Alyosha” monument, defend it, and preserve the memory of the heroic deeds of the heroes of the Great Victory over fascism, which is sacred for the brotherly peoples of Russia and Bulgaria.

V. V. Volodin

Chair of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly
of the Russian Federation

Moscow
16 January 2024
