

RUSSIAN FEDERATION
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Moscow, - 24 - February 2016

Dear Mr. Secretary General,

These days we are celebrating a remarkable date – 20 years ago Russia became a full-fledged member of the Council of Europe.

The accession of Russia to its fundamental instruments has considerably boosted efforts aimed at ensuring truly pan-European activities of this Organization, shaping a unifying agenda for all States of our region without exception, eliminating dividing lines inherited from the “cold war” era.

In the present challenging situation in our continent we consider it important for the Council of Europe to carry out its activities without double standards and selective attitudes that undermine its underlying principles and to contribute to overcoming lack of mutual trust. The Organization’s activities are demanded in the field of human rights including protection of national minorities and eradication of mass statelessness, countering extremism, aggressive nationalism, racial and religious intolerance, as well as development of youth cooperation, intercultural dialogue and in preserving identity of the European civilization.

HIS EXCELLENCY
MR. THORBJØRN JAGLAND
SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

Strasbourg

We hope that through joint efforts we would manage to strengthen the Council of Europe's role as one of the pillars of European architecture and fully deploy its important potential for benefit of creating a common economic and humanitarian space from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean based on the principle of equal and integral security. Russia, for its part, will fully contribute to this objective.

I would like to take this opportunity to extend to you, dear Mr. Secretary General, my greetings on the occasion of the forthcoming milestone anniversary of relations between Russia and the Council of Europe, to wish you good health, and success in your responsible endeavours and all the best.

Faithfully yours,

S.LAVROV