

Greeting speech at the opening of the International Scientific Conference "Russia and the Netherlands in the era of the Napoleonic wars. From War to the Dialogue of Cultures "

Dear participants of the International Scientific Conference "Russia - the Netherlands in the era of the Napoleonic wars. From War to the Dialogue of Cultures",

On behalf of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Bashkortostan, I would like to greet you and wish fruitful work to our forum!

These days mark the 8th anniversary of the establishment of cultural ties between the Republic of Bashkortostan and the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Our friendship began in 2013, when an exhibition dedicated to the 200th anniversary of the liberation of the Netherlands by Russian troops from Napoleonic rule "1813: Holland liberated by the Russians" was held at the Geelvinck Museum in Amsterdam as part of the Russia-Netherlands cross year.

Over the years, several successful joint creative initiatives have been implemented: the cultural and educational project "Imagination" with the participation of the Dutch foundation "Art unites people", and the musical ensemble "Hexagon", and the director of the Geelvinck Museum, Dr. Jurn Buisman, and the chairman of the council of the museum fund, Dr. Dunya Verwey;

Ufa Festival of Arts - 2017 Bashkortostan-Holland "Art Unites"; theatrical performances "Yellow Sun of Van Gogh", "Snowstorm" based on the story of Alexander Pushkin and "The Scarlet Flower" based on the plot of the famous fairytale by S.T. Aksakov with the participation of actors of the State Academic Russian Drama Theater of the Republic of Bashkortostan and musicians of the Dutch ensemble "Hexagon"; the visit of the leadership of Geelvinck Museum to the Republic of Bashkortostan and the public delegation of the House of Friendship of the Peoples of the Republic of Bashkortostan to the Netherlands to the municipalities of Heerde and Olst-Wieje, located on the banks of the IJssel River, through which in 1813 the crossing of the troops of Cossacks and Bashkirs was carried under the command of General A. Benckendorff. These visits initiated the initiative of the director of Geelvinck Museum, Dr. Jurn Buisman, and the chairman of the council of the museum fund, Dr. Dunya Verwey, to create a monument to the Bashkir soldiers "Northern Cupids", who participated in the liberation of the Netherlands from Napoleonic invaders in 1813.

It is very important to point out that the question of creating a monument to Russian soldiers-liberators on the territory of the Netherlands was supported by the Ambassador of the Russian Federation in the Netherlands, A.V. Shulgin.

And it came true. In January 2018, a presentation of this remarkable monument by the Russian-Dutch sculptor, Honored Art Worker of Russia, Alexander Taratynov took place within the framework of the Bashkortostan-Netherlands 2018 festival, on the banks of the Ijssel River near the city of Heerde of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

We are grateful to the Director of the Geelvinck Museum, Dr. Jurn Buisman, and the chairman of the museum fund council, Dr. Dunya Verwey, as well as the municipalities of Heerde and Wijhe for perpetuating the memory of the feat of our compatriots who took part in the heroic struggle for the liberation of the Netherlands.

Cooperation between our regions continues to develop. In 2019, the Presidential Grants Fund supported the project of the Autonomous Non-Profit Organization for the Development of Social and Cultural Initiatives "Center for Intercultural Partnership" "Russia - the Netherlands in the era of the Napoleonic wars. From War to the Dialogue of Cultures". Within the framework of this project, a series of joint events will take place in November of this year: the opening of the monument of Russian general Alexander Benckendorff in Wijhe, who commanded the army that liberated the Netherlands from Napoleonic troops, an exhibition, a flash mob, a bicycle ride through the places of movement of the Russian army, a concert near the monument to the cupids ... These events begin today with our conference "Russia - the Netherlands in the era of the Napoleonic wars. From War to Dialogue of Cultures".

This declared topic is the best way to characterize the relationship that has developed as a result of understanding of the events 200 years ago. Memorialization of the memory of the Napoleonic wars contributed to the creation of intercultural ties between Russia and the Netherlands and the establishment of mutually beneficial cooperation.

I am sure that this scientific forum will become another step towards strengthening our mutually beneficial ties and will make a worthy contribution to the preservation of the historical and cultural heritage of Russia and the Netherlands in the name of universal peace and harmony.

Minister of Culture
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