## Sergey V. Lavrov

### Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation

**Welcome Address to the Participants and Guests of the International Seminar “Russia – European Union: Signs on the Road Map of Cultural Cooperation”**

I sincerely welcome participants and guests of the seminar. This forum will become an important contribution to the development of cultural cooperation between Russia and the European Union, and will promote the development of intercultural dialogue.

It is difficult to overestimate the role of culture in strengthening mutual understanding between peoples, as well as in the expansion of dialogue between nations. For centuries the cultures of Russia and European countries have been mutually enriching each other, spiritually influencing the formation of world-views of entire epochs and generations. The names of Dostoevsky and Shakespeare, Tchaikovsky and Mozart, Prokofiev and Beethoven have become an integral part of the world cultural heritage.

The accord between the civilizations, which is unattainable without the interpenetration of cultures or without recognizing the plurality of development models and value systems, becomes an imperative of our time. Globalization dictates a choice in favour of tolerance and cooperation and the de-idealization of intergovernmental relations.

I am convinced that your meeting will allow in a more comprehensive way to discover powerful potential of interaction in the field of culture between Russia and its neighbours on the European continent and will promote the implementation of new interesting projects.

I wish you successful and fruitful work and all the very best!

**Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation
Sergey Lavrov**