

Press Release

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Council of Europe Secretary General: Tallinn and Moscow should show respect for the memory of the fallen soldiers – and for each other

Strasbourg, 08.05.2007 - In an opinion article published today in an Estonian daily Postimees and the Russian language daily Molodezh Estonii, Terry Davis called on all sides involved to use the occasion of the 62nd anniversary of the victory against the Nazis to bring an end to the dispute about the moving of the Monument to fallen Soviet soldiers in Tallin.

The Secretary General expressed his understanding for the reasons why the Estonian authorities have decided to move the remains of these soldiers, but also reservations about the way it has been done. He called on politicians and public in Estonia to draw conclusions from these events and accept that on such delicate and potentially divisive matters, even the best intentioned initiatives may backfire if they are not prepared, discussed and implemented with appropriate sensitivity.

Terry Davis called on the Russian authorities to be more respectful and less emotional in the way they express their opinions on such a sensitive issue. He stressed that they should abstain from threats and pressure against their neighbour, and that they should be careful not to encourage or give an excuse, even inadvertently, for aggressive attitudes against Estonia in Russian public opinion. He also asked the Russian Federation to show greater understanding for the painful memories associated with the Soviet presence in Estonia after the war.

In conclusion, he welcomed the decision to commemorate the Monument at its new location on the occasion of the ceremonies marking the end of World War II. He underlined that this choice of date places the symbol of the Bronze Soldier in its proper context – the liberation of Europe and provides an ideal opportunity to end this dispute and pay proper respect to those who died so that all Europeans can live in freedom.

Link to article in [Postimees](#) (Estonian) and in [Molodezh Estonii](#) (Russian)
[Link to the article in English](#)

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