



Humanities and Social Sciences

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International non-governmental and non-profit  
association founded in 1919

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OPEN LETTER

To the President of Russian Federation V.V. Putin

To the President of Government of Russian Federation D.A. Medvedev

To the President of Parliament of Russian Federation (Duma) S.E. Naryshkin

To the President of Russian Academy of sciences V.E. Fortov

The International Union of Academies is deeply concerned at the news of plans to reshape the Russian Academy of Sciences. The Russian Academy of Sciences has been the most important research institution in Russia during almost 300 years of its history, and was one of the founding institutions of our Union in 1919. It incorporated the most reputed Russian scholars, and many prominent foreign scholars considered it an honour to be elected among its foreign members. It has always been highly regarded all over the world as a center of innovative research. The proposed reforms threaten to weaken the Russian Academy of Sciences as a centre of basic research and are likely to diminish the high position of Russian science and scholarship.

The proposal to transfer the administrative responsibility of scientific research from scholars to state officials goes against the practice used in the rest of the world and may cause considerable harm to scientific and scholarly research in Russia. No academy of science can function properly without a certain amount of freedom from outside pressure and complete autonomy. No successful reform in the field of research can be applied without taking into the account the opinion of the scholarly community involved.

The International Union of Academies wishes to express its support for the Russian Academy of sciences. It is to be hoped that the current proposals will be reconsidered.

Sincerely yours,

Prof. Øivind ANDERSEN, President (The Norwegian Academy of Sciences and Letters)

Prof. Josep GUITART I DURAN, Vice-president (Institute of Catalan Studies, Spain)

Prof. Hervé HASQUIN, General Secretary (Royal Academy of Belgium)

Prof. Madeline CAVINESS, Honorary President (American Council of Learned Societies)

Prof. Agostino PARAVICINI BAGLIANI, Honorary President (Swiss Academy of Humanities and Social Sciences)

Prof. Shaul SHAKED, Honorary President (Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities)

Prof. Jiří BENEŠ, Board Member (Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic)

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