



Minister Sportu i Turystyki

Kamil Bortniczuk

Warsaw, 18 January 2023

**Ministers responsible for sport,
Signatories of the Statements
on Russia's War on Ukraine & International Sport
from March 8, 2022 and July 4, 2022**

Dear Ministers, dear friends,

With 555 days left until the start of the XXXIII Olympic Games in Paris, every week we are getting closer to the start of many sports competitions, which will be an opportunity for athletes to qualify for the Games in Paris. In some Olympic disciplines the qualification process is already underway.

In view of the ongoing senseless and destructive aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, I note with concern the growing number of representatives of the international sports movement who support the idea of lifting the ban on Russian athletes from participating in international competitions.

As the host of the III European Games, which will take place in Poland on June 21 - July 2 this year, we cannot imagine that Russian athletes will take part in the Olympic qualifications that will be held as part of the European Games. It must be strongly emphasized once again that a country waging a brutal war flagrantly flouts the Olympic idea and has no right to be a member of the peaceful community.

In my opinion, in a situation where people are still dying in Ukraine, it is wrong and harmful to discuss the return of Russian athletes to sports arenas, regardless of how they secure their place in the biggest sports competitions, whether following the European qualification process or bypassing European qualifications and taking part in Asian competitions.

The motto of next year's Olympic Games in Paris is "Games wide open". We should not however allow the Games to be open to representatives of a state that murders citizens of another country in an organized manner, and that is still the Russian Federation today.

Yours sincerely,