**Address by H.E. Ambassador Yuri Sterk, Permanent Representative of Bulgaria to the United Nations and other International Organizations in Geneva**

**on the Occasion of the National Day of the Republic of Bulgaria**

**Geneva, 4 March 2025**

Excellencies,

Distinguished executive officers and representatives of international organizations in Geneva,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Dear compatriots,

It is an honour to address you today on the occasion of Bulgaria’s National Day which marks a significant moment in our history. It is a day when we reflect on our journey as a nation and the values that unite us. As we commemorate 3 March 1878, when a preliminary peace was concluded, putting an end to the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-78 and paving the way to the re-emergence of Bulgarian state on Europe’s map, we are reminded of the resilience and determination of the Bulgarian people. We recall the most tragic, but also the brightest pages of our history which is rich with stories of courage and perseverance, sacrifice and resistance and it is these qualities that have shaped our nation into what it is today. We honour the sacrifices of those who came before us and celebrate the progress we have made as a country.

Today, Bulgaria and the European Union, of which Bulgaria is part, are facing numerous challenges. The ongoing unjustified military invasion by the Russian Federation of Ukraine has tested our resilience and highlighted the importance of maintaining strong transatlantic and EU security relations.

The conflict in the Middle East, multiple local and regional crises, the consequences of climate change, irregular migration and significant challenges to the multilateral system as we have known it since the end of WWII require us to remain united and work together to find solutions.

In this context, the importance of supporting and reinforcing multilateralism and its institutions cannot be overstated. Multilateralism allows nations to confront complex global challenges through collective action and cooperation. It is a tool of statecraft and a mind-set that emphasizes the strength we gain by working together. The United Nations and other multilateral institutions play a critical role in addressing global issues.

Bulgaria remains committed to working with our international partners. From promoting just and lasting peace and security in line with the principles and rules of the UN Charter to advancing human rights and sustainable development, we are dedicated to contributing to a better world for all.

Today, as we celebrate my country’s heroic past, national identity and heritage, let us also look to the future with hope and faith. Together, we can build a brighter and more prosperous future for all of us.

Thank you all for being here today and for your continued support!