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S. Naryshkin, Speaker of the Duma

Dear Mr. Naryshkin,

I write as a former President of the International Mathematical Union and a member of both the Academy of Sciences of the United States and the Royal Society in the United Kingdom to express my shock and dismay at a proposal to disband the Russian Academy of Science. Its history far surpasses that of the US Academy, having been the leader of research in mathematics when the mathematician Euler worked in St. Petersburg under Catherine the Great. An independent scientific academy is one great institutions of our civilization, which is fundamental to the progress of science. If Russia were to abolish hers, it would cast great doubt around the world about the direction in which Russia is headed.

Sincerely,

David Mumford  
University Professor of Applied Mathematics