

To the citizens of the Federation:

We are still standing. By that measure we have prevailed. By this metric we have won.

But what does that mean?

Countless people lost. Entire communities destroyed. Families and friends torn apart, separated by blackouts or death. Feelings of safety and stability stolen from so many.

How can this be categorized as winning? How can we dare to even take pride in where we are today given all the rubble beneath us?

It is because even in our darkest moments, when the foundations of modern life failed us - free travel, subspace, warp engines - and an interstellar threat to our very existence in the form of the Vaadwaur Supremacy emerged to conquer us - we never stopped acting - let alone believing - in our principles.

Take Polaris Squadron, which when on a deep diplomatic mission in Klingon space, risked their own lives to defend Klingon crews and Klingon planets from Vaadwaur assault.

Consider the USS Hikaru Sulu of Taskforce 72, cut off in the former Demilitarized Zone, whose crew chose not to abandon a Cardassian colony under attack despite no chance of reinforcements and a high likelihood of defeat.

Remember the efforts of the USS Andromeda in defending Romulan colonies from attacks, and remember in turn how the Romulans aided the evacuation of the Yeager.

Since its founding, the Federation has always held the values of self-defense, diplomacy, and exploration as core to its very existence. We don't discriminate against old foes or hold the lives of some over the lives of others. When someone needs help - we offer it.

Cut off across the galaxy, it would have been easy for the ships of Starfleet to abandon those who don't fly our flag. To toss diplomacy aside. To make themselves small. And today we are filled with countless stories of brave people doing brave things. Of making themselves large and vulnerable. Of risking their lives for the good of all.

And across the galaxy, members of the Federation held the line.

So many lives were lost in the defense of homes like Vulcan, Andor, and Risa. Civilians and officers alike scrambled to repel surprise invaders. We cannot replace those who died. We cannot bring them back. But we can honor their memories. We can remember how Humans stood up to defend Vulcans and Tellerites stood up to defend Andorians. We can honor that the blood spilt by our dead was red, green, and blue; that we stood together and did not shatter into a hundred individual worlds but survived as one great Federation.

Infinite diversity in infinite combinations.

We have much to rebuild and many to mourn. And we will do the hard work to make it happen. But to sustain this victory we must not forget who we are.

We must not allow ourselves to trade in our sensors for more phasers. We must not abandon our diversity for the illusion of safety that militarization may give us.

As we rebuild our shipyards and our ships, we must remember how important science and discovery was to this victory. How every science lab was just as crucial to our win as every tactical station. How diplomacy led to new allies just as shields led to their survival.

We must keep the lessons of this victory close to our hearts to honor those who died to give it to us.

So I say again that we have won. And while this victory came at a heavy cost, we nevertheless can stand here and say that, while we did not invite this confrontation, we met it. That we are an example that good can triumph. That we do not surrender.

Thank you.