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**STATEMENT BY
MR. MAXIM BUYAKEVICH, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF
THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1417th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

30 March 2023

**On the ongoing crimes by the Kyiv regime and the dangerous policies of the countries
from the Western alliance to escalate tensions**

Mr. Chairperson,

A number of NATO countries continue to step up their involvement in the Ukrainian conflict. Shortly before the 24th anniversary of the North Atlantic Alliance's aggression against the former Yugoslavia, it was announced in the United Kingdom that they would be sending the Kyiv regime munitions of the very same kind that were used as part of the so-called "humanitarian" operation aimed at dismembering the Yugoslav State, namely, armour-piercing rounds containing depleted uranium.

In this room we have heard the representatives of the UK and Ukrainian Governments speaking of how such armaments are pretty much totally harmless and arguing that the Russian armed forces, too, have similar munitions. It is important to understand that depleted uranium ordnance has to date been used in combat operations exclusively by NATO countries. Russia is not using anything of the sort in the course of the special military operation. What we are seeing here is a blatant attempt by the Kyiv regime and its foreign handlers to raise the stakes, without paying regard to the consequences for the lives of future generations in the conflict-affected territories.

On 24 March this year, a briefing by the Chief of the Radiation, Chemical and Biological Defence Troops of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, Lieutenant General Igor Kirillov, was dedicated to the announced supplies of these munitions to the Kyiv regime and the negative experience of their use in conflicts by NATO countries. A transcript thereof has been circulated at the OSCE (SEC.DEL/124/23).

We shall highlight the main points. The principal hazard from depleted uranium arises when toxic aerosols of uranium and its oxides enter the human organism and also when they are deposited in the environment. Whatever falsehoods may be spread in this room by representatives of the Kyiv regime and certain Western countries, the real risks are acknowledged even by specialized entities in NATO member States.

For example, as long ago as 1994, in a summary report prepared for Congress by the US Army Environmental Policy Institute and entitled "Health and Environmental Consequences of Depleted Uranium

Use by the US Army” it was noted that “no technologies available can change the inherent toxicity of DU [depleted uranium]” and that cleaning up areas in which depleted uranium munitions have been used is extremely difficult.

In a report from 2001 by the Royal Society in the United Kingdom entitled “The Health Hazards of Depleted Uranium Munitions” it is pointed out that lung cancer is the main type of cancer found among those suffering health consequences as a result of the use of depleted uranium munitions. Not to mention the verified cases of acquired health issues among NATO military personnel themselves who have handled such shells. Accounts by soldiers from NATO countries who took part in the operation against Yugoslavia in 1999 mention how they were given special safety instructions for when they came into contact with objects hit by depleted uranium rounds.

These and many other findings indicate that over in the West they are fully cognizant of the negative effects of using depleted uranium munitions – probably just as much as the authorities of the countries that have suffered on account of NATO’s aggressive military actions to destroy the statehood of Yugoslavia and Iraq. Regrettably, none of this bothers the representatives of the Kyiv regime, who are aware that, in the event of British rounds containing depleted uranium or other similar munitions being used, significant areas of land will be contaminated by extremely hazardous aerosols. This will inflict tremendous damage on the agro-industrial complex, on the prospects for agricultural exports, on animal husbandry and on plant breeding for many decades to come. Such a turn of events can appeal only to those whose goal is to turn Ukraine into a territory that is unsuitable for healthy living.

It must be understood that the Western alliance’s actions aimed at the military “beefing up” of Ukraine – which includes equipping Ukraine with toxic munitions and certain items of the latest weaponry so that these can be tested on the battlefield – cannot secure military success for the Kyiv regime. All this will merely prolong the armed confrontation, cause further casualties and destruction, and drag out the death throes of Volodymyr Zelenskyy’s criminal regime. In the course of the past week alone, five civilians have been killed and 25 injured as a result of targeted attacks using NATO weapons against civilian objects in Donbas. And it is those who are inciting the Kyiv regime to conduct military operations instead of diplomacy who have these casualties on their conscience.

The instigators of the current European security crisis who provoked the conflict over Ukraine have no desire whatsoever to facilitate a diplomatic solution to it. A case in point is a recent statement by US Secretary of State Antony Blinken: on 28 March he once again spoke out against any ceasefire. Here we may again see the West’s duplicity and hypocrisy at work. For example, in relation to the Minsk agreements the Western governments kept trying to outdo one another in insisting that an immediate ceasefire in accordance with the first paragraph of the Package of Measures was an obligatory precondition for advancing the settlement process. Today everything is the other way round: they are now arguing that a ceasefire would in fact be an obstacle to a settlement, and that hostilities are “the way to peace”.

All this is nothing else but further confirmation that the collective West’s main goal in Ukraine is to combat Russia and its legitimate security interests, rather than to achieve peace for the Ukrainians. In this struggle the Ukrainians are merely expendable material. So there is no way that we can forget that those seated behind the nameplate of the United States of America in this room have long discredited themselves by their double standards. But for some reason they consider themselves entitled to pontificate about so-called principles and to haughtily lecture others.

Mr. Chairperson,

An international event going by the name of “Summit for Democracy” is currently taking place; it was initiated and organized by the United States in an attempt to consolidate its global dominance under the pretext of the confrontation in and around Ukraine. At this event one may hear statements about commitment to the idea, invented in the capitals of NATO countries, of a “rules-based world order”. But one will not hear, for example, explanations as to what “rules” or democratic procedures are guiding the US-led coalition that, without the authorization of the United Nations Security Council, has undertaken military interventions in recent years, including in the Middle East. Nor clarifications as to what on earth US occupation troops, in violation of the Charter of the United Nations, are doing at major oil deposits in Syria. Nor why over in Washington, D.C., they are so opposed to the establishment of an independent international commission under the auspices of the United Nations to investigate the attacks on energy infrastructure in the Baltic Sea, where, as it happens, the trail leads to the United States.

It is evident that the main objective of the aforementioned “Summit” is to revive the logic of a bloc mentality, to create new dividing lines in the world, to set up global decision-making structures in parallel to universal international organizations, to mislead and bend to the will of the United States those countries that, for various reasons, have taken part in that event.

On 27 March, the President of Russia, Vladimir Putin, signed a decree awarding the “For Courage” medal to a young hero, ten-year-old Fyodor Simonenko from the Bryansk region. Fyodor is a striking example of those who have run up against the “rules-based order” promoted by the US authorities. On 2 March 2023, he was being taken to school together with two other children. All of them, along with the driver of the car in which they were travelling, fell victim to an armed terrorist raid by members of the Ukrainian “Foreign Legion” on the peaceful villages of Lyubechane and Sushany, where there are no military facilities whatsoever – an incursion that was planned, prepared and co-ordinated by the Kyiv regime. NATO weapons were used to take shots at the children from behind as they escaped from the attack. Despite being injured, Fyodor kept a cool head and helped to save the two girls’ lives.

No one in the West has condemned that heinous crime – neither publicly, nor in this room. As is clear, for the sake of supporting the Kyiv regime, people there are willing to turn a blind eye to all its atrocities. They have no qualms, though, about manipulating, for political purposes, stories about the fate of children saved by Russia from the negative consequences of the armed escalation. However, that is something we will talk about separately later.

Mr. Chairperson,

We note the disgraceful silence of the OSCE Chairmanship and the specialized institutions of our Organization with regard to the Kyiv regime’s politically motivated persecution of the canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church (UOC). The pressure exerted by State bodies and intelligence services on the Church, their interference in the life of religious communities and freedom of religion are not eliciting any principled assessments – and this at a time when UOC hierarchs are literally sounding the alarm and asking specialized international organizations for protection. Yet, the OSCE has so far not expressed itself, notwithstanding the Kyiv regime’s blatant violations of international legal obligations, including commitments undertaken at the OSCE.

Shortly after the attempt to deprive UOC clergy and parishioners of physical access to one of the principal holy sites of Russian Orthodoxy, namely the Kyiv Monastery of the Caves, the Kyiv regime’s functionaries proclaimed new measures to appropriate church property. A few days ago, the head of the Ternopil regional administration, Mykhailo Holovko, announced the establishment of a special group

allegedly tasked with verifying whether the UOC is rightfully using facilities at the second major Orthodox sacred site in Ukraine, the Holy Dormition Monastery at Pochayiv. In addition, over the past few days, a UOC church in the Ternopil region was set on fire, while a UOC cathedral in Ivano-Frankivsk was attacked by radicals, with the law enforcement authorities standing idly by.

Mr. Chairperson, we are asking you directly: why does the Chairmanship remain silent? What is it doing to protect religious freedoms in Ukraine in accordance with OSCE principles and commitments?

To sum up, the current crisis in the OSCE area and in the Organization itself is in many respects the result of the short-sighted confrontational policy of a Western alliance of countries led by the United States. A just peace in Ukraine is possible provided that there is a ceasefire and the Kyiv regime's formations stop being supplied with weapons and mercenaries from the NATO countries, and also as long as ambitions to reconsider Ukraine's non-nuclear status are abandoned, together with aspirations to alter the geopolitical balance of power in the region by incorporating the territory of Ukraine into the aggressive military bloc that NATO is or into other aggressive alliances.

A sustainable settlement of the Ukrainian crisis is possible by taking account of the realities that have arisen and on the basis of the demilitarization and denazification of territories controlled by the Kyiv regime. It is necessary to ensure that there is proper protection for the Russian language and for the rights of Russian-speaking citizens and national minorities, and that the traditional cross-border ties with Russia are preserved. The West must stop regarding Ukraine as a tool and a bridgehead in its struggle with Russian statehood. Of course, this will also entail the revocation of all illegitimate anti-Russian restrictive measures and the termination of gratuitous pseudo-legal proceedings at various bodies. It is important to revive the legal treaty-based ties across the Commonwealth of Independent States area that have been shattered by the Kyiv regime and also to restore – at the expense of the West, which provoked the current crisis – the civilian infrastructure destroyed by the Ukrainian formations' shelling from 2014 onwards.

The future of Ukraine must be decided by its inhabitants alone, and not by the Kyiv regime's handlers on the other side of the ocean. It is essential to realize the perniciousness of attempts to escalate the military confrontation in and around Ukraine. The plans to organize a military offensive by the Ukrainian armed forces deep into Russian territory must be abandoned: they are certain to fail and putting them into practice will merely lead to unnecessary casualties.

It must be understood that our country will continue to steadfastly defend its legitimate national interests for as long as it takes and to protect its people by all available means, and that it will not tolerate the existence of externally steered geopolitical constructs on its borders that are aimed at undermining or destroying Russian statehood as well as at inflicting unacceptable damage on the security interests of the Russian Federation.

Thank you for your attention.