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**STATEMENT BY  
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THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1432nd MEETING OF THE  
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

13 July 2023

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

Mr. Chairperson,

Certain NATO countries are consciously ramping up the degree of their involvement in the Ukrainian conflict.

Despite the persistent attempts to foster the notion that the West presents a united front, there is evidently great heterogeneity in that quarter. Among the North Atlantic Alliance countries there is no consensus on whether it makes sense to continue the military provisioning of the Kyiv regime or on the acceptable forms and scale of such provisioning. Against a backdrop of false statements by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg about the striving to safeguard Ukrainian sovereignty, some leaders of NATO countries admit that Ukraine today lacks sovereignty precisely as a result of the Western countries' actions. Moreover, they point out that the killing and destruction in the region continue solely because the West is supplying the Kyiv regime with money and weapons.

In everything concerning Ukraine, the NATO summit held in Vilnius on 11 and 12 July was full of signs of despair and enervation, with such signs coming from both Kyiv and the capitals of NATO countries. Volodymyr Zelenskyy had previously made a profusion of public pledges to the West about securing, through blood and toil, symbolic military successes along the combat line. Since 4 June the Kyiv regime has stepped up the hostilities: Mr. Zelenskyy knew what he was doing in sending people to be slaughtered so that he could win brownie points with his NATO masters by a specific date.

There have been no successes – the Ukrainian armed forces have not attained the desired goals, nor have they gained advantages in any direction. The combat line is stable. According to data from the Russian Ministry of Defence, Mr. Zelenskyy's formations have lost more than 26,000 personnel during the period in question. As at the start of this week, 21 airplanes, five helicopters and more than 1,200 armoured vehicles and tanks (including 17 Leopard tanks, 12 Bradley armoured infantry fighting vehicles and five AMX wheeled tanks) had been destroyed.

It is gradually beginning to dawn on those Ukrainians who have not yet seen through the West's designs that NATO needs Ukraine merely as a tool in the battle against Russian statehood. The West has no plans whatsoever for an "independent Ukraine". The conflict is needed for its own sake, as part of an effort to weaken Russia, and not for the sake of a chimeric military victory by the Kyiv regime.

It is important to understand that Ukraine's security cannot be constructed on anti-Russian foundations. Ukraine had opportunities for achieving successful comprehensive development only when, building on our common inseparable history, it preserved and cultivated traditional ties to other post-Soviet States – when the politicians in Kyiv were guided by the opinion of the country's people, rather than that of Western overlords, and they did not go about seeking friends far away and enemies nearby.

As for the West itself, responsible analysts there understand that the drive to drag their countries into the Ukrainian conflict is a hazardous adventure by political elites who have lost touch with reality. Military success for Mr. Zelenskyy is impossible for obvious reasons, not least the manifest disparity in the belligerents' capacities. There is no way that Russia can be vanquished militarily, even with the large-scale and unprecedented supplying of weapons by NATO.

Under these circumstances, the Anglo-Saxons are trying to prolong the armed confrontation so as to trigger destabilization of the socio-political situation in our country from within. Moreover, malicious steps are being taken with a view to causing the economic situation in Russia to deteriorate, plunging its citizens into poverty and preventing development of the State. Over 11,000 so-called "sanctions" have been imposed by the West against our country to date – more sanctions than against any other country in the world. The European Union alone has so far adopted almost a dozen "sanctions packages". All these illegitimate restrictive measures are, of course, causing our citizens certain difficulties, but they are not bringing, nor will they ever bring, the West closer to its desired result. This is, incidentally, borne out by real data on the performance of our economy, which, even according to the estimates of Western institutes, can expect to grow this year while the West faces recession. As for the efforts to isolate our country, the international situation makes it clear that these are quite simply naive.

At the NATO summit in Vilnius Mr. Zelenskyy did not get anything other than a new serving of unrealistic promises and fine words about "security guarantees" of some sort. Upon the insistence of his Western masters, he did finally show up in Vilnius – even though he had publicly announced that he would not go there unless Ukraine received an official invitation to join NATO. During the summit it was again made clear to him at all levels that gaining membership of the Alliance is unlikely, and that Ukraine itself is needed solely in the context of a proxy war against Russia.

Indeed, Secretary General Stoltenberg explicitly stated that supplying weapons to the Kyiv regime so that it could continue fighting was more important than any "security guarantees" from NATO. In response to demands from his protégés in Kyiv, British Secretary of State for Defence Ben Wallace very much put them in their place. He said that Western weapons arsenals were not some kind of home delivery store for the Zelenskyy regime, which ought to display more "gratitude" for the military supplies it had already received. In short, this Englishman confirmed what is obvious: Westerners will forsake the Kyiv regime once they have squeezed the last drop out of Ukraine and that country has outlived its usefulness as a sacrificial pawn in the anti-Russian geopolitical game.

The remarks made in this context both by Mr. Zelenskyy himself and by his Foreign Minister, Dmytro Kuleba, are telling – for example, what was said about the actions of NATO countries being, I quote, "unprecedented and absurd" and about the Alliance itself showing weakness. It would be interesting to know why the nominal leaders of the Kyiv regime are so persistently seeking to drag the territory under their control into an alliance that they themselves perceive as weak – and, what is more, to do so

disregarding their citizens' views. I would recall that there has not been a single plebiscite on this matter in all of Ukraine's history: the goal of joining NATO was incorporated into the Ukrainian Constitution in 2019 without there having been any direct expression of the people's will.

Over the past few days, new tranches of military supplies for the Kyiv regime have been announced by the United States of America, Germany, France and Australia. The authorities in Washington, D.C., have gone farthest of all, confirming that they would deliver 155 mm cluster munitions. Moreover, they stated over there, with consummate cynicism, that misgivings about the consequences for the civilian population arising from the use of cluster munitions did not outweigh concerns that Russia might achieve success in the special military operation. Just over one year ago, on 28 February 2022, a White House spokesperson, Jen Psaki, assessed the potential use of such munitions in the Ukrainian conflict as a "war crime". Today we can see that the US Government has no ethical constraints whatsoever on this score. By the way, our country has to this day refrained from using cluster munitions in the course of the special military operation.

The US Government's actions are motivated by the fact that the stocks of conventional artillery rounds and missiles made available to the Kyiv regime by the West are dwindling. Jake Sullivan, National Security Advisor to the US President, has clarified that without such munitions the Kyiv regime would in effect be forced to halt hostilities.

All this is indicative of a number of things. The main one is that in the West they acknowledge the reverses suffered by Mr. Zelensky's NATO-trained and NATO-armed formations during offensive operations launched deep into Russian territory in Donbas and the Dnieper Lowland. Furthermore, the authorities in Washington, D.C., have confirmed their willingness to provide resources for killing Russians and Ukrainians on Russian territory in order to prolong the hostilities at all costs. Most importantly, they have assumed responsibility for all future casualties resulting from the use of these weapons.

According to incoming reports, the Kyiv regime's formations used cluster munitions on 11 July when shelling the outskirts of the town of Tokmak in the Zaporozhye region of the Russian Federation. All this is accompanied by Western representatives' completely mendacious and cynical protestations of concern over the fate of the conflict-affected civilian population.

We would point out in particular that cluster munitions belong to the category of weapons that have indiscriminate effects; they kill and maim people long after a conflict has ended, posing a threat to the civilian population for many years to come. The cluster munitions container explodes in mid-air as it is still approaching the ground, while the submunitions themselves explode on the ground, projecting shrapnel over a large radius. Depending on the height of dispersal, one cluster bomb can impact an area of up to 30,000 square metres, that is, the equivalent of three or four football pitches. According to various estimates, between 10 and 40 per cent of submunitions fail to explode after they have been dispersed, which means that this is effectively a way of remotely mining vast territories. After lying on the ground for several years, a cluster dud may suddenly be detonated by the movement of a person or vehicle nearby.

Bearing in mind that the use of cluster munitions will not secure military success for the Kyiv regime, we would put a direct question to the US representatives: is it your objective to turn the areas where they are used into one big exclusion zone abandoned by all inhabitants? Then again, the NATO members are known not to be particularly bothered about ethical considerations – not even when they were using munitions of that type during the Alliance's brutal aggression against Yugoslavia in 1999, as well as in other parts of the world.

Two more aspects. We often hear supposed concern for the children in Ukraine being expressed in this room. We would draw attention to an egregious incident that has served to expose existing trends: under

the external direction of the NATO countries, the puppet regime in Kyiv has in effect turned the territory under its control into a transit point for traffickers in human beings, including those trafficking in minors. On 24 June, Denys Varodi, a member of the charity Heart with Love and a former tutor at an orphanage in Chynadiiovo, was caught red-handed at the Mali Selmentsi border crossing point in the Zakarpattia region. As reported, he was trying to take an 11-month-old boy to Slovakia and sell him there for 25,000 US dollars; he had promised to pay the child's mother 5,000 US dollars. According to information from local sources, this man was on the lookout for infants aged between one and two years and had already managed to carry out several such criminal transactions. We note that none of this has elicited public concern from the representatives of Western countries that are funding extrabudgetary OSCE project activities in Ukraine, which, as has been claimed, are meant to tackle manifestations of trafficking in human beings.

The Kyiv regime continues to carry out indiscriminate shelling of peaceful neighbourhoods, as a result of which children are suffering. Last week, three children were injured during massive shelling attacks on the Petrovsky and Kirovsky districts of the city of Donetsk. We would have you know that a special parliamentary commission has been set up in Russia to investigate the Kyiv regime's crimes against minors. Consisting of members of both chambers of the Federal Assembly, the commission held its first meeting on 30 June.

And now to our last point. In the context of the Kyiv regime's unprecedented onslaught – encouraged by the collective West – on the traditional historical assets and spiritual riches of Ukraine, including the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (UOC), there has been no letting up in efforts to deprive the UOC of its rights to use the complex of buildings at the Kyiv Monastery of the Caves. Over the past two weeks, representatives of the Kyiv regime have seized and sealed off six of the monastery's buildings. There continue to be attempts to prevent the monks from accessing other facilities on its territory. The abbot of the monastery, the Metropolitan Pavel, who was placed under house arrest on 2 April, has had his term of detention extended until 31 August by the Solomianskyi District Court of Kyiv at the instance of the regime.

All this is being accompanied by what amounts to pillaging of the holy sites of Russian Orthodoxy located on the monastery's premises. According to available information, the Kyiv regime has reached agreements with certain international bodies and non-profit organizations on removing emblematic treasures from the Monastery of the Caves, including the relics of saints. The plan is to subsequently transfer them to museums in Italy, France, Germany and the Vatican under various pretexts. An inventory has been taken, transport arrangements have been made and funds earmarked to pay for the removal of these treasures.

On a separate note, we should like to point out that on 26 June, as part of the attempts to destroy the UOC's independence, the so-called State Service for Ethnopolitics and Freedom of Conscience demanded of UOC prelates and clergy that they issue what can only be described as political declarations about the severing of spiritual ties with canonical Russian Orthodoxy. What is more, the aforementioned State Service even went as far as demanding that ecclesiastical penalties be imposed on those members of the clergy who failed to issue such political declarations. How can all this be reconciled with obligations under international law with regard to non-interference in church affairs?

We must stress that such politically motivated pressure is not being exerted on the members of any other religious denomination in Ukraine. In that regard, it is legitimate to ask about the OSCE's ability to respond to egregious violations. Why is the Organization silent? What are the three Personal Representatives of the Chairperson-in-Office on tolerance and non-discrimination occupying themselves with? Where can one find even just one action or statement by the OSCE leadership regarding the situation faced by the UOC?

In closing, we wish to emphasize the following. The West seeks to push the idea that a defeat of the puppet regime in Kyiv, which is responsible for outrageous atrocities and massive human rights violations, would somehow be the end of Ukraine and even turn out to be some sort of “global catastrophe”. That is, naturally, not the case. What is required today is a sober glance at reality and the abandonment of attempts by certain Western countries to foist some kind of “rules-based order” on the world through support for the Kyiv regime. It is necessary to revert to the implementation in good faith of existing obligations, principles and norms of international law in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

As for our country, the fact is that Russia has developed immunity to external pressure: it will hold out and continue to follow a sovereign path. Russian society is firmly united behind the Russian President and the tasks set by him for achieving the legitimate and just objectives of the special military operation, which is being conducted in full accordance with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations. All these objectives will most assuredly be accomplished.

Thank you for your attention.