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Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY
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RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS ON MILITARY
SECURITY AND ARMS CONTROL, AT THE 1038th PLENARY MEETING
OF THE OSCE FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION**

1 March 2023

**Agenda item: General statements
Subject: Special military operation to demilitarize and denazify Ukraine**

Mr. Chairperson,

Having failed to adapt to post-Cold War conditions, the North Atlantic Alliance led by the United States of America continues to seek to justify its existence by one means alone, namely, by stirring up a hotbed of instability in Europe and continuing its expansion towards the borders of the Russian Federation. The sabre-rattling members of NATO are trying to convince the international community that they have no aggressive designs, yet in their doctrinal approaches they elevate Russia and China to the rank of “challenges and threats” and, in the course of the “Orion 23” exercise on the territory of France, are practising the preparations for a high-intensity war. We regard these factors taken together as a deliberate policy aimed at militarization of the continent – a policy fraught with unpredictable consequences.

Over the past few days, the Kyiv regime and its Western handlers have ramped up the scale of anti-Russian provocative activities.

The Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation has been observing preparations by the Ukrainian armed forces for an invasion of the territory of the Moldovan Transdnistrian Republic. We believe that one of the Ukrainian-NATO strategists’ objectives may be the army depots in the settlement of Cobasna, which are of particular interest to them in view of the growing shortage of shells in the Ukrainian armed forces and in the NATO member countries.

For our part, we warn the Ukrainian Government and its NATO abettors that the armed forces of the Russian Federation will repulse, in an appropriate manner, any actions undermining security. Dangerous lunges at our compatriots, the Russian peacekeeping contingent, military personnel from the Operative Group of Russian Forces and the army depots in Cobasna will be regarded by us, in accordance with international law, as an attack on our country.

Similarly, we call upon the authorities in Kyiv to curb their revanchist mindset and to refrain from attempts at using unmanned aerial vehicles to carry out attacks on Russia’s civilian infrastructure facilities.

It is our understanding that those in our neighbouring State are aware of the high price of each such “escapade”: we are immediately responding to these through massive strikes on Ukraine’s military command system, defence installations and associated energy infrastructure facilities. No one should be in any doubt that this is what will happen every time should the NATO-sponsored Ukrainian terrorist acts continue.

Mr. Chairperson,

Russia does not cease to flag the dangerous nature of the course pursued by the collective West in seeking to escalate the situation in Ukraine. However, the United States continues to do everything it can to drag the conflict out and to intensify it. Plans are being openly made at the Pentagon for defence industry orders to be placed several years in advance; the ceiling on military expenditure to meet the needs of the Ukrainian armed forces keeps being raised and it is demanded of other members of the anti-Russian alliance that they do the same.

In these circumstances it strikes one as especially cynical of US Secretary of State Antony Blinken to assert that “Americans don’t like to see a big country bullying another.” These words are coming from a politician who supported the US invasion of Iraq and Libya, and who was also all for the idea of overthrowing the lawfully elected Syrian President, Bashar al-Assad. From the representative of a country that has not been at war during just 16 years of its existence. All the other 230 years of wars have not brought the United States any substantial triumphs, but what they have done is to drench half the world in blood. According to data from the US Census Bureau, as at 2022 more than 16 million individuals in the United States had taken part in combat operations. They will hardly have forgotten how their “big country” packed them off to the other side of the world to deploy brutal military force against other States.

By now it is evident to everyone that the militaristic frenzy of the United States and its satellites is not shared by ordinary people in European countries, who are tired of bearing the brunt of the strategic blunders of their governments as these engage in a proxy war against Russia. They do not want to pay out of their pocket for NATO’s return to the formula coined by the Alliance’s first Secretary General, Lord Hastings Lionel Ismay – a formula that is costing them dearly: “Keep the Russians out, the Americans in and the Germans down.”

Last week, anti-war protests swept through the entire European continent. In Madrid, Rome, Naples, Milan, Genoa, Hamburg, Dresden and Berlin and on the island of Crete tens of thousands of people demonstrated for a peaceful settlement of the Ukrainian conflict and against NATO’s military policy. A major rally featuring such slogans as “Go back home!” took place in front of the US air base in Ramstein, Germany, where the defence ministers of Western countries regularly sign off on military “contributions” towards the prolongation of hostilities in the OSCE area.

The widening rift between European citizens and their politicians is attested by the way in which the provocations involving the installation of captured Russian tanks next to our embassies in Germany and the Baltic States played out. You wanted to provoke Russophobic fury and condemnation, but, instead, your citizens brought flowers to our tanks, together with notes commemorating the victims of Donbas.

Especially revealing was the “stunt” of that kind in the German capital. For the international community it not only awakened direct associations with the Soviet tank put on display in Berlin in 1942 (everyone remembers how it all ended back then), but also prompted some Ukrainian neo-Nazis to come out of the woodwork and, in full view of the police, to start chanting “Ukraina ponad use!” (“Ukraine above everyone else!”). (Are we to understand, then, that a revival of Hitlerism is taking place right in the centre of Europe, despite the existing prohibitions?) Finally, the fact that the organizers of the stunt destroyed the

flowers that had been brought by people clearly showed that ordinary Germans' point of view on the situation in Ukraine is simply not allowed to exist. By the way, only last year, German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock let it be known that she did not care what voters thought, whereas the "war against Russia" she herself had declared meant everything in the world to her.

Mr. Chairperson,

We consider the "tank provocations" by the Kyiv regime's Western sponsors to be a way of diverting the international community's attention from the "tank crisis" among the ranks of NATO member countries. We all remember with what pathos their defence ministers announced, on 20 January this year, that they would ship hundreds of heavy tanks to Ukraine to achieve that longed-for "strategic defeat" of Russia. However, they are now forced literally to scrape them together from their national facilities containing mothballed equipment. Now, of the roughly 300 Leopard tanks that Germany has, only 30 per cent are combat-ready. That means just over 90 tanks. And 30 of them have been promised to the Ukrainian Government – in effect, a third of Germany's tank fleet. What intriguing calculations: one does not know whether to laugh or cry! And let us not start talking about the British army, which, as the Chief of the UK General Staff, Patrick Sanders, admitted, has been catastrophically weakened as a result of the provision of military aid to Ukraine. I should like to put a question to my British colleagues in their own language and using their beloved phrases: so who, then, is "poorly led, poorly trained, poorly equipped"? We know the answer. This is just the beginning of the demilitarization of the NATO war machine.

The Russian Federation is currently expanding its armaments production, including on the basis of an examination of enemy weapons. Our armourers have taken apart, bolt by bolt, equipment captured in the course of the special military operation and discovered much that is of use to them. We have what it takes to respond to Leopard, Challenger and Abrams tanks turning up in the zone of hostilities. Systems have been developed that are capable of penetrating the reactive armour on NATO hardware using a projectile trajectory that is hard to detect and with the help of laser guidance. Over the past few days alone, Russian troops have shot down 16 rockets fired from HIMARS multiple-launch rocket systems and destroyed three AN/TPQ-37 and AN/TPQ-36 counter-battery radar stations, three US-made M777 howitzers and two Polish-made Krab self-propelled artillery units.

Incidentally, NATO and EU officials are so afraid of their costly weapons being obliterated on the battlefield that they are instructing their Ukrainian protégés to transport Western equipment in civilian lorries, such as those belonging to the company Nova Poshta. In other words, for the sake of ensuring that the weapons remain intact, they are willing to go to any length, even to use human shields.

Mr. Chairperson,

Today we shall not go into the details of the problem posed by the illicit trafficking of NATO weapons from Ukraine to other parts of the world. We shall limit ourselves to citing a statement from the Pentagon of 28 February this year, according to which reports are reaching the United States that point to improper use of US "military assistance". When we spoke about this previously, the US delegation dismissed it offhand as propaganda. What will they say on this occasion?

Contrary to the assurances by the United States and its satellites, the arms supplies to the Ukrainian Government are not bringing peace, democracy and human rights in their wake – they are merely guaranteeing that there will be further casualties among the civilian population.

On 23 February this year, Ukrainian nationalist formations carried out two strikes on the Petrovskiy district of the city of Donetsk: first one targeting civilians and then a second one targeting the paramedics

and personnel from the Ministry of Emergency Situations of the Donetsk People's Republic who arrived on the scene. In a video disseminated on Ukrainian television our colleagues can see how the shell scored a clean hit on the ambulance. As a result of the attack, three doctors were killed on the spot and one more died in hospital. Ten staff from the Ministry of Emergency Situations sustained injuries of varying seriousness.

What happened there is an egregious war crime by the Kyiv regime. Medical personnel are not combatants and are protected by Articles 6 and 19 of the Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field (1949) and also by the Protocol Additional to it (1977).

The other day, the delegations of the European Union, the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Poland, Romania, Latvia, Lithuania and Belgium bewailed instances in which the Charter of the United Nations and the Helsinki Final Act had been flouted. Will they find the strength to condemn this barbaric attack carried out, in violation of international humanitarian law, by the Ukrainian armed forces against medical personnel? Or will their silence speak volumes, once again demonstrating their double standards to the entire civilized community of States?

Our country's Defence Ministry is also receiving information that points to the intention of the United States and its satellites to carry out a provocation in Ukraine involving the use of toxic chemicals. In early 2023, the Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre drew up plans for shipping a consignment of personal protective equipment to Ukraine, while a cargo of chemicals arrived in Kramatorsk under escort of a group of foreign citizens – chemicals that can be used as filling in the shrapnel munitions transferred to the Ukrainian Government from the United States. Bearing in mind the recent use against Russian military personnel of munitions that deliver a thermal effect and that contain flammable oxidizers and additives, some of which were manufactured in the Czech Republic, we cannot rule out that the illegal provocations will continue. In that regard, we demand that the OSCE Secretariat and the participating States give a categorical assessment of these actions in the light of the CSCE Principles Governing Non-Proliferation, which were adopted by the Heads of State or Government in 1994.

If those in the West do not wake from their Russophobic propagandistic stupor, we will see to it ourselves that those responsible for war crimes and crimes against humanity are brought to justice. A group of investigators and forensics experts from Russia's Investigative Committee are building up the body of evidence for a future international tribunal.

Mr. Chairperson,

Everything that we have mentioned once again confirms that the Russian Federation's sovereign decision to launch a special operation to demilitarize and denazify Ukraine was justified and judicious.

Russian artillery is currently using targeted fire to grind down enemy positions along the entire line of contact. In the Avdiivka segment our troops are expanding the area under their control near Novobakhmutivka and Krasnohorivka; they have established a sure foothold in the southern outskirts of Marinka. Complete firepower domination has been successfully established over the roads leading to Artemivsk. The Ukrainian Government and the Western governments that are sponsoring it need be in no doubt that any spring or summer counteroffensives by the Ukrainian armed forces – assuming that they have the capacity to launch them in the first place – are certainly doomed to fail and could well lead to the downfall of the Nazi regime in Kyiv.

We call upon the United States and its satellites in the West to withdraw the Western mercenaries and military equipment from the territory of Ukraine and to persuade their protégés in Kyiv to embark on

peace negotiations before it is too late. That would be in the interest of the States of the collective West, which by waging a proxy war against Russia have ruined their international reputation and caused the collapse of national economies. They financed and organized the crisis in Ukraine in 2014, and it is in their power to put an end to it. The Russian Federation is firmly committed to its national security interests, which have been disregarded for decades by NATO (with the United States leading the way in that respect), and it will continue the special military operation until the safety of the people in our historical territories is assured.

Thank you for your attention.