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Delegation of the Russian Federation

**RIGHT OF REPLY BY MR. KONSTANTIN GAVRILOV,
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TO THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS ON MILITARY SECURITY AND
ARMS CONTROL, AT THE 980th PLENARY MEETING OF THE
OSCE FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION**

23 June 2021

**Agenda item: Security Dialogue
Subject: Transparency in military exercises and activities**

Mr. Chairperson,

To save time, the text of my main statement will be distributed separately. However, I should like to raise two issues.

First, let me respond to the statement by the representative of Canada, who appears to be the most vocal critic of the Russian Federation. I listened attentively to his statement, in which he spoke so passionately about Russia's "lack of transparency".

For me personally, the Canadian enthusiasm on this issue is quite understandable, as Canada is a State without territory in Europe, but active in inspection activities on that continent. By some quirk of fate and the provisions of the Vienna Document 2011, this State's representatives have become professional inspectors who think that only they know how to properly implement the Document's provisions.

Such specialists have only two opinions in practice: theirs, which is the only right one, and that of the others, who are wrong.

I should like to ask my Canadian colleague where exactly is the Canadian transparency in the context of the Vienna Document 2011. Has any initiative already been undertaken to show an air base or military formation on Canadian territory or is any such initiative planned? Not to mention inspections or evaluations of Canadian military facilities. Therefore, I would like to suggest to the Canadian representative that before assessing the transparency of others he should assess the openness of his own State.

There is yet another point I would like to make in connection with the question raised again today about the modernization of the Vienna Document 2011. This might be worth thinking about in the event that the territories of Canada and the United States of America are opened up to inspection missions under the Vienna Document 2011. If they refuse to do so, there can be no further discussion on updating this document in depth.

Second, Mr. Castillo's presentation on the "escalating effect" of military training activities that can lead to dangerous situations is well illustrated by today's incident in the Black Sea.

At 11.52 a.m. on 23 June, the British Royal Navy guided-missile destroyer HMS *Defender*, operating in the north-western part of the Black Sea, crossed the State border of the Russian Federation and passed for three kilometres through its territorial sea near Cape Fiolent. The British destroyer was given a warning that it would be fired at if it crossed the Russian State border, but it did not respond.

At 12.06 and 12.08 p.m. a border patrol ship fired warning shots. At 12.19 p.m., an Su-24M aircraft dropped warning bombs (four OFAB-250s) in the path of HMS *Defender*.

At 12.23 p.m., thanks to joint actions of the Black Sea Fleet and the Border Guard Service of the Russian Federal Security Service, the guided-missile destroyer HMS *Defender* left Russian territorial waters.

It seems impossible to conceal our indignation at the UK Ministry of Defence's statement that the said destroyer was allegedly "conducting innocent passage through Ukrainian territorial waters". For my part, I feel obliged now to warn the former "ruler of the waves" that next time the bombing, if such a decision is taken, will be aimed not at the path but at the target. I recall the words of Henry Kissinger that Russia is "kind, hospitable, benevolent, but invincible". History has confirmed this for over a thousand years. I would also like to recommend Western strategists read the Bible, which says you should not make threats but nor should you fear anyone yourself.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.