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Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY
MR. MAXIM BUYAKEVICH, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF
THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1407th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

19 January 2023

**In response to the address by the President of the Committee of Ministers of the
Council of Europe, H.E. Ms. Thórdís Kolbrún Reykfjörð Gylfadóttir,
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iceland**

Mr. Chairperson,

Minister, we welcome you to this meeting of the Permanent Council.

Unfortunately, your address and subsequent remarks have confirmed that a deliberate policy is at work to turn the Council of Europe into a tool for promoting anti-Russian initiatives and imposing neoliberal values, to the detriment of the development of collective principles and a dialogue of equals. This short-sighted policy by the countries of the Western alliance has led to the destruction of the common humanitarian and legal space. It is sad to observe how one of the oldest European platforms is being transformed into a wholly EU-controlled human rights structure with a distinctly anti-Russian bent.

Abusing their majority, the NATO and European Union countries want to complete the process of subjugating the Council of Europe to the goals of their politico-military and economic eastward expansion and their “re-education” of those who are not to their liking. This is accompanied by a policy of double standards and attempts at meddling in internal affairs. In view of such approaches and such a definition of objectives, it is clear that Russia can have no truck with the Council of Europe. That is why it will soon be a year since our country withdrew from that organization of its own accord.

Not being a member of the Council of Europe, we consider it superfluous to comment substantively on the programme of priorities for the Icelandic Presidency of its Committee of Ministers. At the same time, we will not miss this opportunity to remind you of the inevitable consequences of a policy of unrestrained pandering to the Kyiv regime and reckless involvement in assorted anti-Russian projects in the spirit of what is referred to by some as “holding Russia accountable”. Make no illusions: taking part in intrigues of this kind will bring even greater discredit on the Council of Europe and cause it to lose even more of its international prestige. Any “invented” mechanisms and the fruits of their activities will be legally void. From a broader perspective, they will make it more difficult to find a way out of the current crisis and lead to further escalation of the confrontation.

In addition, we should like to emphasize that the termination of Russia's membership of the Council of Europe is not having a negative impact on the human rights situation in our country. Russia is committed to its international obligations under several universal treaties in this field concluded within the United Nations framework. The provisions of the main treaty law instruments of the Council of Europe have been incorporated into Russian legislation. The Constitution of the Russian Federation guarantees a wider range of rights than the European Convention on Human Rights.

Minister,

In Russia we remember well the efforts undertaken by Iceland, which provided a platform for dialogue between the USSR and the West during the Cold War. We hope that the forthcoming Council of Europe summit in Reykjavik in May will not come to be remembered as a symbol of confrontation and the consolidation of new dividing lines. We expect your country not to start blindly marching in lockstep with anti-Russian radicals. No good will come of that. We would remind those present in this room that signing up to any potential anti-Russian decisions of the summit in Reykjavik will be treated by Russia as an unfriendly act entailing inevitable damage to bilateral relations. For the sake of future generations, we call upon everyone to demonstrate wisdom and think about the consequences.

Thank you for your attention.