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**STATEMENT BY
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THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1466th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

21 March 2024

On the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

Madam Chairperson,

The International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, established by the United Nations General Assembly in 1966, is being observed today. This date reminds us of the tragic events that took place in South Africa in 1960, specifically in the township of Sharpeville. What happened then was that the police fired upon and killed scores of participants in a peaceful rally who had been demonstrating against the tightening of the apartheid regime's segregation laws.

The problems of racism and racial discrimination, glorification of Nazism, neo-Nazism, xenophobia and related intolerance have lost none of their relevance in the OSCE area and warrant close attention. The same is true of the attempts to rewrite the outcome of the Second World War and the judgments of the Nuremberg Tribunal, and to elevate to the status of heroes those who fought against the anti-Hitler coalition.

The latest proof of the Kyiv regime's neo-Nazi nature is the award conferred by the Ternopil regional council on the Nazi veteran Yaroslav Hunka, who "served" with the 14th Grenadier Division of the SS ("Galicia Division"). We would remind you that the members of the 14th Galicia SS Division are war criminals with the blood of millions of innocent victims dripping from their hands.

We are deeply concerned about revanchist tendencies in Germany, where efforts are in full swing to popularize the nefarious ringleader of the Third Reich, Adolf Hitler. For example, leading research institutions in that country are planning to publish his collected speeches from 1933 to 1945. We stress that this project is not about subjecting them to critical analysis but about the publication of primary sources. Moreover, the plan is to issue the collection in both printed form and as an audio edition, making the speeches accessible to the general public, including schoolchildren. It is proposed to complete this massive scholarly endeavour by 2033, the 100th anniversary of the Nazis' advent to power in Germany.

And this is no isolated incident. At the German authorities' instigation, the "creative legacy" of the raving Führer is being systematically brought into the public square. The Nazi leader's speeches, writings and directives from 1925 to 1933 were similarly "studied" and published in 17 volumes starting in 1993. A two-volume work entitled *Hitler, Mein Kampf. Eine kritische Edition* ("Hitler, Mein Kampf: A Critical

Edition”) has also been issued: since 2016 it has been reprinted 12 (!) times. Not to mention the fact that for decades the country’s authorities paid out social benefits to former military personnel of the Third Reich, members of the SS organization and collaborators.

Moreover, in contrast to its acknowledgement that the crimes it committed during the colonial era constituted an act of genocide, Germany has never acknowledged the inhuman siege of Leningrad and other crimes against the peoples of the USSR to be acts of genocide. We shall very soon be circulating among the participating States – and also among the relevant structures of our Organization – some detailed material on recognizing the genocide of the Soviet peoples during the Great Patriotic War. We urge everyone to read it attentively.

Consumed with a sense of total impunity, the authorities in the Baltic countries, in particular Latvia, are openly supporting the adherents of Nazism. Just a few days ago, on 16 March, the annual procession of former Waffen-SS legionnaires took place in Riga. Active politicians, parliamentarians and members of radical right-wing parties showed up for the event. The Waffen-SS anthem was sung; a number of participants wore uniforms with Nazi insignia. Some of them even stated proudly on camera that they were “Hitler’s subjects”. A video containing this admission can easily be found on the Internet. This, then, is the distorted understanding of the rights to freedom of expression and freedom of peaceful assembly that pertains in “progressive democracies”. Given such manifestations, we will continue to insist on the imperative necessity of incorporating the topic of combating neo-Nazism into our Organization’s agenda.

We note that, a few weeks ago, a monument to the Galicia SS Division of Ukrainian volunteers was removed in the town of Oakville in Canada. That formation took part in punitive operations against partisans and the local population on the territory of the USSR. It was under the pressure of Jewish community organizations that the authorities agreed to a step that is quite unprecedented for them. There are no grounds for assuming that the Canadian Government will display the resolve to distance itself from Ukraine’s Nazi past and eliminate other monuments to the agents of Hitlerism. That flash of common sense on the part of Canada’s political establishment would be worth heeding in the United States of America, where there are also disgraceful monuments, including one commemorating the Lithuanian collaborator Adolfas Ramanauskas-Vanagas.

We note that the authorities in Washington continue to ignore the spread of ideas of racial superiority across US territory. Gatherings of neo-Nazis there fail to elicit a meaningful official response. The problems of racial discrimination and intolerance continue to persist. This is confirmed by recent statistics released by the Federal Bureau of Investigation: around 60 per cent of hate crimes committed in 2022 were motivated by the victims’ race or ethnicity.

The problem of systemic racism and racial discrimination also exists in the United Kingdom. This was once again confirmed by the findings of a recent study by the Runnymede Trust, a specialized UK non-governmental organization. It is pointed out there that people of African and Asian descent continue to be denied their rights. This refers to the restriction of opportunities for employment and of access to basic social services, such as healthcare, housing and education. Data is cited indicating that 75 per cent of women of colour suffer discrimination in the workplace. It is stressed that Black and Asian people are exposed to police brutality and inhumane treatment considerably more frequently. On a separate note, it is pointed out that the legal “innovations” introduced in 2022 and 2023 affecting various spheres of life in British society present “a significant and sustained threat to the rights of people of colour” in the United Kingdom, including their civil and political rights.

Some depressing figures are cited in a report published by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights in October 2023 that is entitled “Being Black in the EU”. To quote some remarks by the

Agency's Director, Michael O'Flaherty, "it is shocking to see no improvement since our last survey in 2016. Instead, people of African descent face ever more discrimination just because of the colour of their skin." In particular, it is noted in the document that, despite the adoption of anti-discrimination legislation in 2000, people of African descent continue to encounter prejudice and to become the victims of hate crimes. Overall, 45 per cent of respondents said that they had been exposed to manifestations of hatred in the past five years. By way of comparison: that share was 39 per cent in 2016. Moreover, looking across countries, the highest figures are observed in Germany and Austria. The problem of racial profiling by the police also persists, as noted by 58 per cent of respondents.

Madam Chairperson,

In view of what has been said, it is small wonder that representatives of the countries mentioned by us have, for two years in a row, voted against the United Nations General Assembly resolution on combating the glorification of Nazism, neo-Nazism and other practices that contribute to fuelling contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.

We call upon the OSCE participating States to stop encouraging the glorification of Nazism and neo-Nazism, including within their own borders, and to reflect on the baneful consequences of historical revisionism and revanchism. It is important that they also fulfil their international obligations. We call upon OSCE officials to finally begin reacting to manifestations of racial discrimination and neo-Nazism in the Organization's area of responsibility.

Thank you for your attention.