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**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF UKRAINE
AT THE 1026th FSC PLENARY MEETING**

(19 October 2022)

Agenda item 1, High-level Security Dialogue «Armed Forces and Environment»

(Delivered by Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Natural Resources of Ukraine Mr Yevhenii Fedorenko)

Dear Ms Secretary General, dear colleagues!

First of all, I want to thank you for the opportunity to join the Forum for Security Co-operation meeting. I am grateful to the Belgian Chair for the consideration of the topic of environmental protection at this Forum for the first time.

Almost 50 years ago, representatives of the countries represented at this meeting signed the Helsinki Final Act. This document became a starting point for the establishment of the OSCE and stated the principles of inviolability of borders and territorial integrity of states. The participating countries agreed that their activities could not cause damage to the environment of other states.

Today Ukraine is defending these principles with arms in its hands.

In late May, Minister Ruslan Strilets already talked about the colossal negative environmental impact of the war at the preparatory meeting of the 30th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum.

Since then, another 150 days of war have passed. Despite the significant successes of the Ukrainian Armed Forces, during this period, the damage to nature has only increased.

At the Ministry of Environmental Protection, we monitor the state of the environment 24 per 7. We inform the Ukrainian people and the international community about environmental quality indicators.

Within 7 months of the war, we have recorded more than 2,000 cases of environmental damage.

We have developed new methodologies to calculate environmental damage caused by war. This is something that no one in the world has done before us.

Based on these methodologies, a preliminary assessment of the damage caused by Russians to the environment of Ukraine exceeds 37 billion euros.

The Russian dictator blackmails the world with the possible use of nuclear weapons. His armed bandits have already put the entire continent at risk of nuclear disaster.

On September 19, the Russian military attacked the industrial zone of the South Ukrainian nuclear power plant. The rocket exploded just 300 meters away from the operating nuclear reactors.

Ukraine is doing everything possible to prevent a nuclear accident at Europe's largest Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, occupied by Russians. All 6 power units have been transferred into cold shutdown mode.

Over the past 2 weeks, as a result of Russian shelling, the Zaporizhzhia NPP lost the external power supply three times (on October 8, 12, and 17). Diesel generators were switched on automatically. Diesel fuel reserves at the station are limited, and if the generators are stopped this will lead to disruption of cooling of the active zones of the nuclear power plant power units.

The aggressor country does not care about it. Russia does not agree to establish a demilitarized zone around the Zaporizhzhia NPP. This is true nuclear blackmail.

Suffering defeats from the Armed Forces of Ukraine directly on the battlefield, Russian troops resorted to terrorist methods. They intentionally launch missiles and kamikaze drones on Ukraine's civilians and infrastructure.

On October 10, Russian troops launched one of the most massive missile strikes - more than 80 missiles were fired at Ukraine. Millions of Ukrainians were left without electricity and a water supply. Massive attacks on civilian facilities using Iranian kamikaze drones were repeated on October 11 and 17. More than 30 fires were caused as a result of these attacks.

In general, as a result of forest fires, attacks on oil depots and industrial facilities, emissions into the atmosphere have already exceeded 67 million tons.

Polluted air has no borders. During explosions, toxic gases are released into the atmosphere. We breathe this air. With rain, these pollutants enter the soil and water. They end up in the human food chain. Ukrainian grain, vegetables, and fruits are consumed by the whole world.

Russian aggression turned the world's most fertile chernozem soil into a huge minefield.

Although within 7 months sappers have neutralized more than 240,000 explosive devices, almost a third of Ukraine's territory - about 200 thousand square kilometres - will need demining.

The aggressor country regularly uses white phosphorus munitions, polluting the environment and cynically violating international law.

As a result of Russian aggression, almost a third of Ukraine's forest fund has been damaged.

Currently, 450,000 hectares of forest are still under occupation. These are 63 forest types. We can not fully monitor and assess the situation there.

More than 2.4 million hectares of forests have already been liberated by the Armed Forces of Ukraine. These forests have suffered significant damage. They have been burned and dug up with trenches. It will take decades to recover.

20% of nature-protected areas of Ukraine have been affected by the war. Russians have occupied 8 of our nature reserves and 10 national parks. They do not support the protected status of these areas and use them for the deployment of troops.

Ramsar and the Emerald Network sites are at risk. Biodiversity in these protected areas is a richness of global importance. But Russia does not share the values of the civilized world.

The aggressor country deliberately destroys the water supply infrastructure.

The latest example is targeted strikes on the dam of the Karachunivske Reservoir on the Ingulets River near Kryvyi Rih. As a result of these attacks, the water in the river temporarily turned red.

Water polluted as a result of Russian aggression leaks into transboundary rivers, the Black Sea, and the Sea of Azov, and can reach neighbouring countries.

Russia has occupied over 2 thousand deposits of energy resources, metals, and minerals worth 12.7 trillion euros.

The occupation of raw materials in the centre of our continent is blocking the technological development of the whole of Europe.

As of now, the direct damage caused to the climate by Russia's war against Ukraine is estimated at at least 31 million tons of greenhouse gas emissions.

The potential amount of greenhouse gas emissions due to the future reconstruction of Ukraine's infrastructure is estimated at 79 million tons.

Within one short speech, I will not be able to cover all the thousands of war crimes that the Ukrainian government has recorded since the first day of the large-scale invasion.

But even the few examples I have shared with you today demonstrate that Russia with the help of its ally Belarus, uses nuclear, energy, and raw material whip and terrorizes us with a lack of resources. The world must recognize that Russia is the largest sponsor of terrorism in the modern world.

We are very grateful to every OSCE country that helps us to fight against this terror.

The Helsinki Act, signed in 1975, was aimed at preventing wars and violations of international law. The war against Ukraine threatens the existing global order.

We call on the international community to help end the war as soon as possible and bring the aggressor to justice for the sake of peace and security in Europe and globally.