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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 1067th PLENARY MEETING OF  
THE OSCE FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION**

24 January 2024

**Agenda item: Security Dialogue  
Subject: Humanitarian mine action**

Mr. Chairperson,

We welcome the convening of a plenary meeting on mine action, in line with the politico-military mandate of the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC). However, we are compelled to remind the Cypriot Chairmanship that the inclusion of accusatory remarks concerning the Russian Federation in the concept note for the meeting and the invitation of speakers who repeat the well-known set of Western propaganda clichés about our country are in no way conducive to productive work in the Forum and further worsen the deplorable state in which the Forum is currently in thanks to the efforts of the most recent Chairmanships.

Just as at the previous FSC plenary meetings on mine action, we see that the Western delegations have not yet mustered the strength to respond substantively to the irrefutable evidence we have repeatedly presented regarding Ukraine's deliberate violations of the norms and principles of international humanitarian law. Distinguished delegates, reading out copy-pasted statements, the sole purpose of which is to divert attention from the real facts surrounding what is happening in Ukraine, will not hide the truth about the Zelenskyy regime's crimes, which are being perpetrated with your direct connivance and intervention.

Mr. Chairperson,

The Russian Federation wishes to once again draw attention to the continued pumping of cluster munitions into Ukraine. Despite the fact that Ukraine and the United States of America are not parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions, they are bound by international humanitarian law, which prohibits the use of any weapons against civilians and civilian objects. Being one of the largest producers of such weapons, the United States has gained not only a new market for its military-industrial complex and a financial advantage, but also an opportunity to replace "stale stock" with high-tech cluster munitions in its national army. The transfer of such ammunition to Ukrainian armed formations is further confirmation of the aggressive goals of the United States, which is hell-bent on inflicting a "strategic defeat" on our country.

We note the steady increase in the use of such weapons against civilian objects and the population, as recorded, *inter alia*, by the US non-governmental organization Human Rights Watch. We can assure our

Western colleagues that they will not “destroy Carthage” by using the Ukrainian armed forces to try to intimidate and harm the civilian population of Donbas, Belgorod and the Zaporozhye and Kherson regions. We will clear our towns and cities of mines and rebuild everything that has been damaged at the hands of the puppets in Kyiv and Western mercenaries. At present, however, it is extremely difficult to fully reconstruct the regions as Ukrainian nationalists are continuing to shell civilian objects using cluster munitions and to lay anti-personnel and anti-tank mines en masse. The Joint Co-ordination Headquarters of the Russian Federation for Humanitarian Response has recorded evidence of the deliberate mining of roadsides, village footpaths, bridges, dams, areas around residential buildings where there are children, and educational and medical institutions and other civilian objects. We regularly bring the relevant information to the attention of our allies and associates in our bilateral contacts. In addition to its violations of the Inhumane Weapons Convention and its Protocols, in particular Amended Protocol II, we note Ukraine’s failure to fulfil its obligations under the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, to which it has been a party since 2006. According to United Nations data, the Ukrainian Government was meant long ago to destroy some 6 million PFM-1 Lepestok landmines and 700,000 anti-personnel mines of other types as part of its obligations under the Ottawa Convention. As we can see, this has been realized only on paper. In November 2023, the United Nations confirmed the use of Lepestok landmines by the Ukrainian armed forces in the Kharkiv region near the city of Izium.

Russian troops regularly detect German-made LOS, DM31 and high-explosive fragmentation DM-11 munitions in the People’s Republics of Lugansk and Donetsk. NATO-standard MARS-II multiple-launch rocket systems deploy DM1399 mines, which demining experts are unable to get close to, and LARS multiple-launch rocket systems deploy DM1274 mines. German AT-2s, which are actively used by Ukrainian neo-Nazis, pose a serious danger to the civilian population. The magnetic sensor of such munitions reacts to the smallest metal objects and can be triggered either by a car or a button from a pedestrian’s clothing. Our engineering forces have also detected French-made HPD F2 mines, which cannot be defused or retrieved. The fact that the Ukrainian armed forces are using such weapons is a direct violation of Amended Protocol II. However, in keeping with their double standards, Western States not only remain silent about the crimes of the Kyiv regime, which is under their tutelage, but also actively finance them.

Mr. Chairperson,

Unlike the Ukrainian authorities, the Russian Federation is fully committed to the norms and principles of international humanitarian law, including the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the Protocols thereto and the Inhumane Weapons Convention and its Protocols. From the very beginning of the special military operation, our army has been operating in accordance with the Guide to International Humanitarian Law for the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, which was developed with due regard for the international treaties to which the Russian Federation is a party. In particular, the guide sets out the basic requirements for the use of anti-personnel mines in accordance with Amended Protocol II. Work is carried out during routine combat readiness exercises to inform Russian armed forces personnel about the norms and principles of international humanitarian law, including the provisions and technical requirements of the aforementioned Protocol.

In an effort to stabilize as soon as possible the socio-economic situation in the regions contaminated by US cluster munitions and European and Ukrainian landmines, the Russian Federation regularly takes the necessary measures to prevent deaths and injuries in the zone of the special military operation. In accordance with the demining plan for the territories of the new constituent entities of our country, in 2022 and 2023, more than 43,000 hectares of the territories were cleared of mines, and over 1.2 million explosive hazards were discovered and destroyed. Every day, Russian mine clearance detachments inspect important social infrastructure such as hospitals, kindergartens, schools and energy, water and gas supply facilities, among other things. The results of the demining work conducted at the national level are reflected regularly

in our reports under the Inhumane Weapons Convention and in our annual responses to the OSCE Questionnaire on Anti-Personnel Mines and Explosive Remnants of War.

At the same time, the Russian Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Emergency Situations are working to raise awareness of the mine risk among the local population, especially among children. Classes are being held in schools on basic safety and on the procedure to be followed when explosive devices are detected. Outreach efforts among the community are conducted through local radio, the press, television, Internet publications, talks at workers' meetings and the distribution of instructional videos and leaflets on the safety precautions to be taken when explosive hazards are detected. Since the beginning of 2023, individual talks have been held with the public in the territories of Donbas. More than 3,300 people have been reached in this way.

We attach particular importance to the support and rehabilitation of landmine victims. According to the Russian Ministry of Defence, the main referrals for treatment by military surgeons continue to be shrapnel wounds caused by banned PFM-1 mines, European anti-personnel munitions for remote mining, and cluster munitions. Our responses to the OSCE Questionnaire on Anti-Personnel Mines and Explosive Remnants of War detail the State assistance provided to citizens who are victims of explosive remnants of war, including medical care, follow-up rehabilitation and social adaptation and integration in the event of disability. In particular, their rights are defined in Federal Act No. 181 of 24 November 1995 on the social protection of persons with disabilities in the Russian Federation. The law enforcement agencies, for their part, are investigating and carefully documenting all instances of shelling by the Ukrainian armed forces – including mortar shelling – of Russian regions. The Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation has opened more than 4,000 criminal cases against some 900 people, including not only members of radical nationalist associations in Ukraine and foreign mercenaries, but also representatives of the country's military and political leadership.

Mr. Chairperson,

We cannot fail to address the issues contained in the concept note for the meeting regarding the inclusion of "gender and diversity aspects" in national humanitarian mine action strategies. Firstly, we consider these aspects to be incompatible with Russian national realities. There are currently no female personnel involved in the relevant units in Russia, and there are no such plans for the foreseeable future. We are convinced that the wording actively promoted by the West runs the risk of interfering in the internal affairs of OSCE participating States, which would not be in keeping with the fundamental principles of our Organization. Secondly, the expansion of the scope of non-core "gender" work in the Forum, especially considering the crisis it is currently facing, can hardly be regarded as being in the interests of strengthening the only remaining politico-military dialogue platform in Europe. Instead, the FSC should concentrate on such major problems as the need to overcome the degradation of the international legal system in the area of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation in the face of the manifold violations of the Inhumane Weapons Convention, the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and the norms and principles of international humanitarian law.

The Russian Federation once again calls on the collective West to prove in practice its commitment to the principles of international humanitarian law and to put an end to the policy, which runs counter to the spirit and letter of these principles, of suppressing evidence of crimes committed by the Ukrainian armed forces against the civilian population. Violations by the Kyiv regime require an immediate response from the international community, including the United Nations, the International Committee of the Red Cross and other relevant international organizations, and those responsible must be held accountable.

Thank you for your attention.