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**STATEMENT BY
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FEDERATION TO THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS ON MILITARY SECURITY
AND ARMS CONTROL, AT THE 1041st PLENARY MEETING OF THE
OSCE FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION**

29 March 2023

Agenda item: Closing session of the Chairmanship of Bosnia and Herzegovina

Mr. Chairperson,

Allow me to congratulate you on the conclusion of Bosnia and Herzegovina's Chairmanship of the OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC). We welcome His Excellency Mr. Slaven Galić, Deputy Minister of Defence of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and thank him for his comprehensive summary of the current session.

We agree that European security is today going through a profound systemic crisis. Its causes have to do with the striving of a number of States to preserve, by every possible means, a unipolar world order and prevent the emergence of a just system of international relations – one that would also cover the OSCE area.

Seeking to regain their exclusive control over global processes, the powers that be in Washington, D.C., and their client States have opted, in the spirit of the Axis countries of the 1930s, to establish a coalition directed against the main alternative centres of power, that is, Moscow and Beijing. As an integral part of the West's geopolitical strategy, the confrontational and destructive concept of a "rules-based order" that has nothing whatsoever to do with international law continues to be propagated.

The most striking example of the collective West's desperate attempts to counteract the emergence of multipolarity is their warmongering reaction to the productive talks between the President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin, and the President of the People's Republic of China, Xi Jinping, on 20 and 21 March this year. All at once, the US Government fast-tracked its delivery of Abrams tanks to Ukraine, the Polish Government announced the establishment of the first permanent garrison of the US Army on its territory, and the UK Government revealed its plans to send to Ukraine depleted uranium munitions, which have catastrophic effects on human beings and the environment. Contrary to the intention of NATO strategists, these moves will not undermine Sino-Russian unity, but they do herald a new dangerous turn in the spiral of inter-State confrontation, this time even involving a nuclear component. It is not Russia that instigated it.

By now it is clear even to the average citizen that the security situation in Europe has become worse than it was at the height of the Cold War. The military activities of the NATO nuclear-weapon bloc have acquired a most aggressive thrust. A new stage has been launched in the expansion of the Alliance. The assertion by the delegation of Finland that this was motivated by the Russian special operation is an attempt to shift on to others responsibility for the consequences of the change in the geopolitical status of north-western Europe, which, on account of the emotional decision taken by the elites of two States, may well be transformed from a haven of stability into an arena of confrontation. We have already drawn certain conclusions and enshrined these in our updated Maritime Doctrine.

We are keeping a close eye on the evolving situation in Transdnistria. Egged on by its Western handlers, the Ukrainian leadership is demonstrating a readiness to undertake an armed incursion into the territory of the Transdnistrian Moldovan Republic. In these circumstances we shall be guided by the mandate that Russian military personnel in the region have with regard to ensuring security. We made a warning in this connection at the FSC meeting on 1 March this year.

As for the European Union, it will in the long term increasingly come to be micromanaged by the US authorities and turn into an appendage of NATO, with potential front lines across the length and breadth of the EU area. According to the Secretary of the Security Council of the Russian Federation, Nikolay Patrushev, the West is already making preparations for open armed conflict with Russia.

We also note the clearly expressed desire of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy to provoke a turn of events where the NATO States will have no choice but to put boots on the ground in Ukraine. At a press conference in Kyiv on 24 February this year, he took the liberty of saying that “the United States will then send its sons and daughters [to war], just as we are today sending ours. And they will fight because it is a question of NATO. And they will get killed.” Somewhat earlier, in an interview with Czech television on 2 November 2022, he recommended the unthinkable, namely, not to be afraid of the possibility of a nuclear war. Apparently, from the point of view of the United States, NATO and the European Union, that is how statements by, as they would have it, a “peaceful neighbour” and an “innocent victim of aggression” are meant to sound like.

Mr. Chairperson,

The current difficult situation is having an impact on the functioning of the FSC, whose resilience is being severely put to the test. Unfortunately, faced with the challenges of a watershed period, the Western participating States have forgotten about the canonical tasks of the Forum as enshrined in the CSCE Helsinki Document of 1992, namely, to conduct negotiations on conventional arms control, disarmament, confidence- and security-building measures (CSBMs), and ways of ensuring military stability in Europe.

The relentless bolstering of the NATO military contingent on the “eastern flank” is today capping the degradation of confidence-building and arms control mechanisms. No one mentions any more the treaties destroyed by the United States, that is, the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems, the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty and the Treaty on Open Skies. The West has dealt a devastating blow to the CSCE Principles Governing Conventional Arms Transfers, which were adopted at the highest level. The Vienna Document 2011 formally remains in force, but the NATO-EU “lobby” at the FSC has for months now been blocking the holding of the Annual Implementation Assessment Meeting. We are not refusing to engage in dialogue. However, to us it is obvious that, in a context where NATO member countries are violating the CSBM regime and in the absence of trust, the verification mechanism becomes a means of obtaining intelligence information – something that does not accord with the spirit of the Vienna Document.

Of course, it is difficult to talk about trust and transparency in the military sphere when Russian military personnel are confronted in Ukraine by the “combined forces of the West”, which are micromanaging the leadership of that country in an all-out “hybrid” war against Russia. We have reliable information that the Ukrainian armed forces’ operations are being planned in Washington, D.C., and London. Not only are the co-ordinates of targets for strikes provided by Western reconnaissance units, but even the inputting of this data in weapons systems is done under the full supervision of Western specialists. Moreover, the thousands of civilians killed in the Donetsk and Luhansk People’s Republics and the Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions by shelling from NATO weapons are regarded by the Anglo-Saxon powers that be as mere “collateral damage”.

Further shipments of weapons and ammunition to Ukraine will not secure that coveted breakthrough on the battlefield for the Western governments, but they will most assuredly prolong the armed conflict, deplete European economies and inflict even greater damage on the defence capability of NATO member countries. The transatlantic elites cannot but be aware of the fact that, through their actions, they are multiplying the risks of the Ukrainian conflict spilling over into Europe and escalating into a direct clash involving nuclear powers.

We categorically reject the anti-Russian reproaches made today with regard to aggressive nuclear rhetoric. The principal function of Russian nuclear weapons is to deter a nuclear attack. In view of all the military threats being generated by the West, an agreement was reached within the framework of the Union State of Russia and Belarus on co-operation in the nuclear realm. This step is hardly any different from NATO countries’ long-standing practice of conducting “joint nuclear missions”, as part of which military personnel from Belgium, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Türkiye are trained in the combat use of the US nuclear weapons deployed in their countries. The only difference is that we shall be carrying out the announced measures not on someone else’s territory but on our own national-level territory and in the spirit of the Union State’s Military Doctrine. We should like to stress that, in a context where the United States and NATO have declared their intention to inflict a “strategic defeat” on Russia, it would be naive not to expect any appropriate military and technical countermeasures on our part.

Mr. Chairperson,

In these circumstances we do not rule out the possibility that the “Western conglomerate”, which is suffering defeat in Ukraine, could undertake all kinds of reckless actions. In particular, provocations involving the use of toxic substances have long since become a calling card of Western-sponsored so-called civil society organizations like the White Helmets in Syria. Legitimate questions continue to arise in relation to the activities of laboratories controlled by the Pentagon in post-Soviet countries, including Ukraine, and in Asian, African and Latin American States, where the local authorities have no way of exercising oversight over the research being conducted on their national territory. As for the consequences that pandemics have, we are sure that everyone knows what they are like following the experience of combating the COVID-19 virus.

In view of the factors that we have set out, the question arises as to whether these policies of the United States, NATO and the European Union correspond to the fundamental interests of the countries and peoples of the European continent. The answer is obviously no.

We warn the transatlantic allies, mired in primitive Russophobia as they are, about the counterproductive nature of the current course aimed at exacerbating confrontation with Russia. If and when our Western colleagues see the light, we are willing to examine the prospects for our potential future relations, but on our conditions. We are prepared for any development; we will defend our national security interests using all the necessary means.

For now, though, in order to achieve sustainable peace in Europe, it is necessary to stop the supplies of Western armaments and mercenaries to Ukraine, and to ensure that Ukraine reverts to a neutral, non-bloc status and that the new territorial realities that have arisen as a result of the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination are internationally recognized. Ukraine must be demilitarized and denazified, the military biological threats emanating from its territory must be eliminated and its non-nuclear status enshrined.

Mr. Chairperson,

In closing, allow me once again to express our appreciation to Mr. Galić, Deputy Minister of Defence of Bosnia and Herzegovina, for summing up the current session of negotiations.

We are grateful to you, distinguished Ambassador Siniša Bencun, and all the members of the Bosnia and Herzegovina Chairmanship team for your professional approach during these difficult discussions. Despite the different approaches of the OSCE participating States when it comes to assessing the evolving situation in Europe, you have succeeded on the whole in strengthening the FSC's role as an important platform for dialogue on "hard" security issues and in reaffirming commitment to the Rules of Procedure of the OSCE and the principle of consensus, which is pivotal to our Organization.

We trust that the incoming Bulgarian Chairmanship, despite the close ideological proximity to NATO and the European Union, will manage to create a non-discriminatory atmosphere for the work of our autonomous decision-making body and show itself to be an "honest broker".

We are grateful to Belgium, which is leaving the FSC Troika, and we welcome the delegation of Canada as the incoming member of the Troika.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.