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**STATEMENT BY
MR. MAXIM BUYAKEVICH, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF
THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1466th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

21 March 2024

**On the increasing military involvement of certain NATO member countries in further
confrontation in and around Ukraine**

Madam Chairperson,

The NATO countries are stepping up their hybrid aggression against Russia, including through participation by proxy in the armed confrontation against Russian military personnel in Ukraine.

Over in NATO they have stopped concealing the facts about the presence of their military personnel in Ukraine, including the involvement of these in the organization and planning of military operations. Former and serving personnel from NATO countries are in the territories controlled by the Kyiv regime, acting as consultants and operators of technically sophisticated weapons, but also as mercenaries.

According to Russian Ministry of Defence data, a total of 13,387 foreigners have come to Ukraine since February 2022. They include individuals from the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Poland, Romania and other countries. There are also a few Germans among them. France, whose representatives at all levels deny the presence of French mercenaries on Ukrainian territory, has lost 147 killed out of the 356 individuals from that country who arrived there. Overall, 5,692 foreigners are confirmed to have been eliminated to date. A considerable proportion of those who are left have chosen to abandon the territory of Ukraine after weighing up their chances.

We note the surge in speculations about the deployment of regular military formations and new types of weapons to support the Kyiv regime. According to verified information in Russia's possession, a plan has already been worked out in France for deploying 2,000 soldiers.

We draw attention to the co-ordinating role played by the United Kingdom and the United States in the proxy war being waged against Russia by the NATO countries. The UK authorities' actions in that regard include the provision of advice on military planning to their stooges in Kyiv. During a recent bilateral meeting between British Defence Secretary Grant Shapps and commander of the UK armed forces Tony Radakin on the one hand, and Ukrainian Defence Minister Rustem Umierov and Commander-in-Chief Oleksandr Syrskiy on the other, matters related to future tactics were discussed, which included an emphasis on sea-based operations and air attacks using unmanned aerial vehicles.

Foreign weapons and military equipment are being actively used for attacks on Russian territory. The terrorist forays by members of Volodymyr Zelenskyy's formations against the Belgorod region have been particularly intensive. Between 12 and 18 March, they undertook several attempts to capture a number of settlements, involving the use of more than 2,500 fighters, 35 tanks and around 40 armoured combat vehicles. All their operations were repelled. The Ukrainian saboteurs' goal was obvious, namely to intimidate the civilian population and to try to disrupt the casting of votes in the Belgorod region during the Russian presidential election. They failed to achieve their goal, for the inhabitants of the Belgorod region and other Russian regions bordering Ukraine demonstrated their endurance, courage and resolve. There was a record turnout at the polling stations (as for the election itself, we will talk about it separately later on today).

The regional capital, Belgorod, was subjected to the most intensive shelling attacks. Scores of projectiles were fired at the city between 15 and 17 March, including some by means of Czech-made RM-70 Vampire multiple-launch rocket systems. The Czech representative will obviously have nothing to say about this today. However, he must surely understand that weapons supplied by Czechia are being used for indiscriminate shelling, as a result of which civilians are dying. In total, 11 people were killed and more than 100 were injured by the shelling attacks on the Belgorod region over the past week. Forty-one people, including two children, are currently being treated at medical facilities in the region.

Significantly, a few days before the terrorist forays in the Belgorod region, the US and British embassies in Moscow issued official announcements regarding terrorist attacks, referring to an "imminent" terrorist threat in Russia. This confirms yet again the degree of those two countries' involvement in co-ordinating and directing the operations by fighters of the criminal Kyiv regime.

On 15 March, a direct hit on a residential building in the city of Donetsk claimed the lives of three children aged two, ten and 16 years; the building itself was completely destroyed. All in all, the Ukrainian neo-Nazis' shelling attacks over the past week resulted in at least 138 civilian casualties: 17 people were killed, including four minors, while 121 were injured, including eight children.

We note that the OSCE leadership – above all the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Maltese Foreign Minister Ian Borg, and OSCE Secretary General Helga Schmid – have not condemned the indiscriminate shelling of Russian towns and cities carried out by the Kyiv regime's fighters. As one can see, they care about the plight of children only when this subject can be used for convenient political ends, first and foremost anti-Russian ones.

We are hearing the representatives of a number of Western countries say that they have "no intention of allowing Russia to win in Ukraine". We would point out that Russia is not fighting against Ukraine, let alone its inhabitants – rather, it is battling neo-Nazism in Ukraine, which was engendered and is being nurtured there by certain Western countries. And in this struggle Russia will most assuredly be victorious.

Madam Chairperson,

The traces of the weapons being supplied by NATO countries to Ukraine are very often found to vanish and, what is more, not only following their destruction in combat. According to the *New York Post*, the Pentagon does not know how the Kyiv regime is spending the money it receives. The equipment sent to Ukraine is being sold on through the black market. Questions have reportedly been raised in the Pentagon and the United States Congress about weapons deliveries worth 42 billion dollars.

It is no coincidence that a website called “Ukraine Oversight” was launched a few days ago at the behest of the Pentagon’s Inspector General. The website is intended to help in identifying cases of corruption or irregularities in the transfer of military aid to Ukraine. This was done in view of the ongoing reluctance among members of Congress to earmark further military allocations for the Kyiv regime. And likewise in view of the appeals made by the authorities in Washington to European countries, above all Germany, urging them not to let up in their support for the Zelenskyy regime and to prevent the hostilities in the Ukrainian conflict from coming to a halt.

We stress that the growing involvement of NATO countries in the Ukrainian conflict is merely causing Russian society to pull closer together in its resistance to external threats. There is no place – nor can there be any – for NATO military personnel and military equipment on Russian soil. Russia will do everything it can to ensure that neither military threats nor threats of any other kind can be posed to neighbouring sovereign States from Ukrainian territory.

Our country has repeatedly stated the need for the formation of a just multipolar world order. It has also announced its readiness to use political and diplomatic means to achieve the goals of demilitarization and denazification of Ukraine, as well as the elimination of threats to the security of our country posed by NATO countries from Ukrainian territory. And if that readiness is not reciprocated, the special operation will be continued by military means until the objectives set have been fully attained. They will all be achieved.

Thank you for your attention.