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STATEMENT ON THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION'S ONGOING WAR OF AGGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINE

As prepared by Military Advisor Arne Knapskog for the Forum for Security Cooperation
Vienna, 22 May 2024

Mr. Chair,

Norway fully aligns with the statement delivered by the European Union but would like to give the following remarks in our national capacity.

We deeply regret that the Russian Federation has for a second time obstructed the dialogue in this Forum. This behaviour is unprecedented in the history of the OSCE, and notably impedes the constructive dialogue for 56 participating States.

Norway strongly condemns the Russian Federation's ongoing aggression against Ukraine. These last weeks' egregious developments in the Kharkiv region are the continuation of Russia's clear violation of Ukraine's territorial sovereignty. They constitute a blatant disregard of its commitments under international law, the OSCE Code of Conduct, and the Helsinki Final Act, as well as the humanitarian principles on which these commitments are based.

Mr. Chair,

Norway stands with Ukraine. We join allies in offering Ukraine a timely, effective, and comprehensive defense of its territory and its population.

In its revised national budget, the Norwegian government has proposed to increase military support for Ukraine by NOK 6 billion, bringing the total military support in 2024 to NOK 13.5 billion. This includes up to NOK 4 billion for measures to ensure that Ukraine quickly gain access to more air defenses. Including civilian support, the total number lands at 22 billion kroner for 2024.

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Norway is also committed to President Zelenskiy's Peace Formula as co-chairs of working group 3 on energy security and working group 4 on civilian hostages, prisoners of war, and deported children.

Mr. Chair,

In this very room, the Russian Federation has attempted to deter its opponents by threatening to use nuclear weapons. These threats constitute highly irresponsible behavior. We can assure the Russian delegation that we do not waver in our support of Ukraine's fight for freedom and independence.

The Russian Federation started this war and can choose to end it. We call on Russia to end its aggression and completely and immediately withdraw its forces from Ukraine's internationally recognized territory.

Finally, Norway looks forward to discussing this and other security issues in our region at the upcoming Annual Security Review Conference in June. We reiterate that the conduct of this conference is already mandated and should not be subject to politicization in this Forum.

I thank you.