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**STATEMENT BY
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THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1489th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

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On the restrictions against Russian media

Madam Chairperson,

I am obliged to respond to the stream of fabrications utterly divorced from reality that have issued forth from representatives of the United States of America and a number of other countries. Jumping ahead a little, I should like to point out that such brazenly aggressive and reckless rhetoric by the speakers shows only one thing, namely that Russian media outlets in those countries have reason to be afraid, and that the population there are not allowed to listen to a point of view that differs from the official narrative.

On 13 September, a US official announced new sanctions against the following Russian media holdings: the international news agency Rossiya Segodnya (RIA Novosti and Sputnik agencies), the autonomous non-profit organization TV-Novosti (RT television channel and Ruptly video agency) and the non-profit organization Eurasia. Restrictions have also been placed on the director general of the Rossiya Segodnya news agency, Dmitry Kiselev, and the head of the Eurasia organization, Nelly Parutenko. An earlier round of sanctions had been imposed just a few days before, on 4 September. Restrictive measures were applied at that time to the same media outlets and to RT editor-in-chief Margarita Simonyan, as well as to a number of other employees of that television channel.

The US intelligence services have been particularly eager to join in the persecution of Russian journalists. The search of the home of an RT journalist by two dozen FBI agents, who subjected the Russian woman to humiliating treatment, was an outrageous manifestation of lawless behaviour sanctioned from above. In view of fears for her safety and health, this RT employee had to leave the country in haste. Proceedings on trumped-up charges have been instigated against a number of staff from Russian media outlets and even against US citizens who had the courage to appear in broadcasts by those outlets. If arrested, they face lengthy prison sentences.

In a blatantly cynical manner, the current US administration is trying to justify its unprecedented repression of Russian media as a way of combating “interference” by them in domestic political affairs. This is essentially yet another made-to-order campaign, a witch-hunt, in which a deliberately cultivated atmosphere of widespread fear and spy paranoia makes it possible for the ruling circles in the United States

to manipulate public opinion and insulate the population from any information that is inconvenient for the authorities.

This time the United States is attempting to play the role of “guardian” of social stability and the integrity of democratic processes, using totalitarian censorship methods not only on its own territory, but also far beyond the US borders. Having ridden roughshod over its international obligations to ensure pluralism of opinion and even the provisions of its own Constitution, the United States has effectively declared war on freedom of speech around the world, resorting to open threats and blackmail against other countries in an attempt to set them against Russian media outlets and establish sole control over the global information space. Across the ocean, they cannot reconcile themselves to the growing popularity of Russian media operators in many countries of the world in view of the one-sided and false picture of what is happening on the planet created through the efforts of the Western mainstream media.

Madam Chairperson,

I should also like to say a few words about the situation regarding media activities in other participating States.

The conditions under which correspondents from Channel One, Rossiya 1, NTV, TASS and RBC are forced to work in the United Kingdom remain unacceptable. Members of our media are finding it increasingly difficult to obtain information and make contacts. There are cases of journalists having to wait a long time for the authorities to decide whether to extend their visas, which prevents them from carrying out their professional duties properly. The situation is aggravated by the time it takes for the initial issuance of visas to Russian journalists.

The European Union continues the practice of political censorship and the total cleansing of the information space of any viewpoints that offer an alternative to Western narratives. This is yet another of the many examples of the disregard shown by the European Union and its Member States towards their international obligations to ensure media pluralism, and serves as further testimony to the degeneration of democratic societies in the countries of the collective West.

We have warned repeatedly and at various levels that the imposition by the European Union and its Member States of repressive measures against Russian media outlets and their staff will not go unanswered by us. If these warnings are ignored, we will be obliged to retaliate. The responsibility for such a development would lie solely with the European Union and the EU countries that have supported this decision.

The situation as regards the breaching of OSCE principles by the Republic of Moldova continues to be cause for grave concern. There is totalitarian censorship of the information space and egregious violations by the authorities in Chişinău of their commitments and obligations related to public access to information and a pluralistic press. I would remind you that in the run-up to local elections in the autumn of 2023, under the pretext of a “Russian threat”, the Moldovan authorities first of all blocked 22 Russian-language news sites and then went on to do the same to 31 online media outlets and six television channels. The persecution of “undesirable” voices continues to this day. For example, in March of this year the Canal 5 television channel and the Maestro FM radio station were stripped of their right to broadcast, having been designated a “threat to State security” by the Moldovan authorities. On 7 August, the Council for the Promotion of Investment Projects of National Importance suspended the licences of two Moldovan television channels, Mega TV and Familia TV. On 9 August, two Gagauzian television channels, Ilk Halk Televizionu and Oguzsatlink, were ordered to stop rebroadcasting programmes from Russia and Belarus within ten days, and fines amounting to almost 15,000 US dollars were imposed on them. This means that, since the end of 2022,

at least 17 Moldovan television channels and radio stations have been suspended or discontinued upon instruction from the authorities.

We have also repeatedly drawn attention in the Permanent Council to the lawless behaviour of Latvia towards undesirable media outlets and journalists. At the end of August this year, the Riga City Court announced the verdict in the case of Vladimir Dorofeev, one of 16 Russian-speaking Latvian journalists who is being prosecuted by the authorities on spurious grounds. This is yet another biased verdict aimed at total cleansing of the information space by the country's authorities. There has been no response to these actions on the part of the European Union and the relevant OSCE executive structures.

Madam Chairperson,

All of these openly discriminatory measures constitute a flagrant violation of the Helsinki Final Act by a number of OSCE participating States. To quote the preambular part of section 2 ("Information") of the "Co-operation in Humanitarian and Other Fields" chapter: "The participating States ... make it their aim to facilitate the freer and wider dissemination of information of all kinds, to encourage co-operation in the field of information and the exchange of information with other countries, and to improve the conditions under which journalists from one participating State exercise their profession in another participating State."

We entertain no illusions that the rampant censorship in the United States, other Western countries and vassal countries will receive a proper assessment from the relevant international bodies, whose activity is directed by the authorities in Washington, D.C. Nevertheless, we consider their silence to be an endorsement of this practice and to amount to *de facto* complicity in the arbitrary treatment of Russian media outlets.

We would like to rest assured that the future heads of the OSCE's relevant structures, above all the future Representative on Freedom of the Media and the future Director of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, will break these institutions' long-standing silence regarding the veritable persecution of Russian media outlets in Western alliance countries, which already became the norm under their predecessors, and that they will finally begin to react to developments in keeping with their mandates.

Thank you for your attention.