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RUSSIAN INITIATIVE REGARDING A TREATY ON EUROPEAN SECURITY

There is no false bottom or hidden agenda in our idea of a treaty on European security. There is a desire to agree on comprehensible rules of the game, to gradually restore confidence, the undermining of which lies at the root of all our problems, and to avoid having to rely exclusively on national means rather than co-operation among States to ensure security.

No one can have anything to lose from this and everyone will be a winner. Our initiative does not contemplate the “marginalization” or alienation of any countries or international organizations. On the contrary, from the outset it provides for the participation of all the States of the Euro-Atlantic region and the multilateral security associations operating here — the OSCE, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), the European Union (EU) and NATO — in the elaboration and conclusion of the treaty. Again, this is in the spirit of the central provision of the Charter for European Security: “Within the OSCE no State, group of States or organization can have any pre-eminent responsibility for maintaining peace and stability in the OSCE area or can consider any part of the OSCE area as its sphere of influence”. I hope that for Brussels even today this does not sound like a heresy.

Concluding a treaty would ensure a new quality of politico-military protection for all our States that would also be extremely cheap. This is a positive alternative to a further build-up of mutual suspicions and fears, to a succession of unilateral decisions giving rise to the same symmetrical or asymmetrical answers and to a new spiral in the arms race.

Twenty years have gone by since the end of the Cold War. There is no confrontation of systems. But when it comes to ensuring the security of our States we still rely on the arrangements and instruments of the past. If we can overcome this tunnel vision in terms of ideologies, we can achieve a new kind of collaboration between States in the area of hard security.

There is nothing haphazard about the format of the future agreement we are proposing. We are putting forward an updated system of Euro-Atlantic security made durable by way of suitable legally binding reciprocal commitments. Herein will lie the obvious “added value” of the treaty compared to the provisions of previously agreed documents within the CSCE/OSCE and the NATO-Russia Council. Naturally, such a format is also conditional on agreement on mechanisms that would ensure compliance with the treaty, including — if necessary — urgent consultations and instruments for the elaboration of a collective response to a particular situation.

We see the key conceptual blocks of the future treaty roughly as follows:

- Legally binding confirmation and consistent interpretation of the basic principles of the security of States and of the relations between them in the Euro-Atlantic area, including the inadmissibility of the use of force;
- Guarantees to ensure equal security for the States of the Euro-Atlantic area by refusing to ensure one's own security at the expense of the security of the other parties to the treaty, which is in full accordance with the Charter for European Security;
- In line with the commitments entered into under the same Charter, the genuine rejection of claims by individual States or groups of States to an exclusive right to maintain peace and security in the Euro-Atlantic area;
- Identification of the basic principles for the development of arms control regimes, confidence building, restraint and reasonable sufficiency in military development;
- Imparting a new quality to co-operation in countering the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, terrorism, drug trafficking and other forms of transnational organized crime;
- Elaboration of uniform approaches to the principles, procedures and mechanisms for early warning and conflict resolution.

All of this is reflected in the draft elements of the treaty on European security circulated by us.

If the initiative to conclude such a treaty and our thoughts on its content seem sensible to you on the whole, we would propose that consideration be given to further steps. After all, it is only by working together that we shall be able to determine the shape of the future treaty. No one will be able to impose anything on anyone. The final product of the negotiations ahead of us should be the result of joint brainstorming, by which it will be possible to respond to the concerns of each of our States and to find mutually acceptable collective solutions.

We believe that the OSCE can and should make a weighty contribution of its own to the shaping this treaty. This follows both from its tasks in connection with the goals of the future treaty and from the fact that it is the most representative Euro-Atlantic organization, whose composition overlaps completely with the set of States Parties to the future treaty.

At the EU-Russia summit in Nice on 14 November, the President of France, Mr. Nicolas Sarkozy, and the President of Russia, Mr. Dmitry Medvedev, proposed holding a summit on this issue.

Clearly, we are not talking about a typical regular OSCE summit meeting. It is conceived as a thematic meeting, in which not only our Heads of State but also the leaders of the CIS, the CSTO, the EU, NATO and, of course, the OSCE would participate.

I believe that a collective decision on the launch of negotiations on a treaty on European security could be adopted at the summit and the appropriate platform for negotiation determined.

It goes without saying that the summit would have to be well prepared. There is an interesting proposal to form a high-level expert group of special representatives — “sherpas” — of the participating States. Needless to say, “sherpas” from all the aforementioned organizations would also be required.

I believe that the launch of negotiations on a treaty on European security would itself have an immediately useful effect, helping to improve the politico-military security situation in the Euro-Atlantic area. In that connection, it will be important, as President Sarkozy urged, for us all to refrain from any unilateral steps that could further complicate the situation.

Depending on the results of the official and informal discussions at this meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council, we shall present specific proposals on how to organize practical work in future on the treaty, including the convening of a pan-European summit.