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Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES OF
THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA, THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS, THE REPUBLIC
OF KAZAKHSTAN, THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC, THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA,
THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA, THE REPUBLIC OF
TAJIKISTAN, TURKMENISTAN AND THE REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN TO
THE OSCE AT THE 1266th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL
VIA VIDEO TELECONFERENCE**

7 May 2020

On the occasion of the 75th anniversary of victory in the Second World War

This year we are celebrating a momentous jubilee, namely, the 75th anniversary of victory in the Second World War. The relevance of this important topic on the OSCE's agenda was confirmed by the adoption, on 6 December 2019 at the Ministerial Council meeting in Bratislava, of a joint statement by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia, the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Republic of Belarus, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Serbia, the Republic of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The Second World War, which claimed tens of millions of lives across the world, was a horrendous tragedy, indeed the greatest humanitarian catastrophe in the history of mankind.

We salute the memory of all those who lost their lives in the struggle against German Nazism and its allies and accomplices in the perpetration of the most heinous crimes: the combatants from the countries of the anti-Hitler coalition, the partisans and members of resistance movements, and the victims of the Holocaust and of the Nazis' plan ("Generalplan Ost") to exterminate the peoples of Eastern Europe and of the Soviet Union.

The victory over Nazism is a symbol of self-sacrifice and heroism in the cause of defending the liberty and independence of our peoples, and of the triumph of justice, humanism and decency. The more the war recedes into the past, the more clearly one can recognize the tremendous historical significance of that great victory in terms of shaping the principles of international law, of standing up to major threats and challenges to security, and of refusing to tolerate any increase in manifestations of Nazi-inspired ideology, extremism and xenophobia.

We believe it is crucial to preserve the historical truth about the Second World War and not to permit any revision of its legal outcomes, taking into account, notably, the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the judgments of the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg. We note the

significance of the 1948 UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide as a key international instrument.

Yet, the fact is that the aforementioned historical truth is beginning to be forgotten – indeed, quite often it is even being distorted for reasons of political opportunism. Monuments to the soldiers of the liberating armies are being destroyed, and neo-Nazi views and right-wing extremist ideas are being propagated.

We would remind you that by honouring the heroes who forged victory on the battlefield and on the home front in those war years, we are helping together to preserve the historical memory of the great deeds accomplished by our peoples and of the price we have all had to pay for peace and progress. That is why it is important to display a sense of responsibility and fulfil commitments to the preservation of memorials, monuments, plaques and cemeteries commemorating those who fell in action fighting for the liberation of the countries of Europe and Asia.

We urge the international community to take a resolute stand against the rehabilitation of Nazi ideology, racist propaganda, extremism, hatred on ethnic, racial and religious grounds, xenophobia and all associated forms and manifestations of intolerance.

The lessons of that terrible war must continue to serve as a moral compass and driving force for all of progressive humanity. They are also a warning to us that we must never allow a new world war to break out, for it might well turn out to be the last and wipe out mankind.

We draw attention to the unifying potential of this topic and the need to enshrine it further in the OSCE's agenda. We are in favour of broad international dialogue, based on equality and mutual respect, that seeks to strengthen the system of international security and trust.