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**STATEMENT BY
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THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1463rd MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

29 February 2024

**On the Western alliance countries' gross attempts to interfere in the
internal affairs of Russia**

Madam Chairperson,

Non-intervention in the internal affairs of sovereign States is one of the fundamental principles of the OSCE's work. Unfortunately, in the real world there are dangerous attempts by the Western alliance countries to revise that principle and to rewrite the commitments of our Organization to suit their national practices, which are at odds with international law.

We recall that, in accordance with a provision in Chapter VI of the Helsinki Final Act, "the participating States will refrain from any intervention, direct or indirect, individual or collective, in the internal or external affairs falling within the domestic jurisdiction of another participating State ..."

The Astana Commemorative Declaration does not say a word about such intervention being permissible either. It merely states that "commitments undertaken in the field of the human dimension are matters of direct and legitimate concern to all participating States and do not belong exclusively to the internal affairs of the State concerned."

This is not the first time we have observed a desire to play fast and loose with the key concepts of "legitimate concern" and "intervention". The first concept is clearly governed by a provision in the 1991 Document of the Moscow Meeting of the Conference on the Human Dimension of the CSCE. There, immediately following the reference to "legitimate concern", the participating States "express their determination to fulfil all of their human dimension commitments and to resolve by peaceful means any related issue ... on the basis of mutual respect and co-operation".

The second concept – "intervention" – is defined in the Helsinki Final Act as "direct or indirect assistance ... to subversive or other activities directed towards the violent overthrow of the regime of another participating State".

The Western alliance countries' interest in substituting one concept for another is quite understandable. It so happens that intervention is a method of foreign policy and of shaking up the domestic

political situation in other countries used by the EU bloc and the authorities in Washington. It is also clear to us that the supposed link between internal repression and external aggression attributed to Russia is in effect nothing more than an attempt by them to project their own narratives on to other States. As is well known, the flagrant violations of human rights by the United States of America have led to numerous neocolonial military interventions in various parts of the world. Just ask the people of Vietnam, Grenada, Afghanistan, the former Yugoslavia, Libya and Iraq. Or is this “Russian propaganda and disinformation” too?! Each of these aggressions was, in the first instance, pursuing domestic political goals in the United States itself.

Madam Chairperson,

The reaction of Western leaders, politicians and diplomats, including those at the OSCE, as well as the media to the news of the death of Russian citizen Aleksey Navalny was telling in this regard. As is known, on 16 February this year, the Directorate of the Federal Penitentiary Service of Russia for the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Area reported the death of convict Navalny in penal colony No. 3. According to that statement, the prisoner felt unwell after a walk and lost consciousness almost immediately. The facility’s medical staff arrived at once, and an emergency medical crew was called. All the necessary resuscitation measures were carried out; they did not yield positive results. Paramedics pronounced the convict dead at the scene. The medical report signed by Navalny’s mother stated that his death was due to natural causes.

However, the Western alliance countries decided to extract political dividends from this tragic incident by whipping up as much hysteria as possible and shamelessly dancing on Navalny’s grave. At the same time, one gets the impression that their representatives in this room are simply ill-informed, and most of them indeed do not have the slightest idea who the deceased Russian citizen was. We may interpret their scanty knowledge as a reflection on the extremely low competence of the diplomats still remaining in Moscow, who are evidently incapable of providing their capitals with proper information.

Otherwise, one simply cannot explain the persistence with which attempts are being made to portray Navalny as a “prisoner of conscience” or “political prisoner”. For those who are not in the know, we would remind you that this Russian citizen, before he caught the eye of Western intelligence services and was taken under their wing, held far-right views and stood out for repeatedly making xenophobic and anti-Semitic comments in public; he would invariably refer to himself as a “certified nationalist”. Not without the influence of his female cousin in Kyiv, who openly supports the Azov terrorist regiment, and inspired by the knowledge he picked up at Yale University, he began his career by supporting Nazis in Russia. Relevant statements can easily be found on YouTube or on his LiveJournal blog; we will not quote them – among other things, they are full of obscenities. However, his Western handlers simply turned a blind eye to such “trivial matters”. And the fact that Navalny later apologized for some of his tirades does not nullify their hateful nature liable to incite inter-ethnic discord.

Nor shall we list the numerous articles of the Russian Criminal Code violated by him, for which he was justly sentenced to be punished. We recall that this Russian citizen received his first sentence for what was an entirely criminal offence – the embezzlement of money by deception. The complainant in the Yves Rocher case was a foreigner who, as we know, was summoned to the US Embassy to be reprimanded and pressurized into having the case closed. Insinuations that the criminal cases were “fabricated” do not stand up to criticism. As for holding those responsible to account for violating the law, this is a normal principle of the functioning of a healthy legal system in any country. Or do “enlightened democracies” have different methods?

There is only one instance in which we can agree with Aleksey Navalny and even quote him. That is his expression of enthusiastic support for Crimea’s reunification with Russia in March 2014. The peninsula,

he said, “will remain part of Russia”, as Crimea is not “some sort of sausage sandwich to be passed back and forth”. Two million people with Russian passports live in the region – “you can’t unmix mincemeat”.

Madam Chairperson,

We regard the demands for “independent public inquiries” as nothing less than flagrant interference in the internal affairs of our country. And also as hypocritical concern on the part of the Western alliance countries over developments in Russia or the fate of other criminal offenders, so-called political prisoners, such as Yury Dmitriev, head of the Karelian branch of Memorial, who was convicted of paedophilia, or Oleg Orlov, co-chairman of the same organization. Or Ivan Safronov, the *Kommersant* correspondent who was caught passing classified information to a foreign intelligence agent from a NATO country and convicted of treason. And many others whose names have been heard in this room today. Colleagues, is it not time to deal with one’s own problems, which are, to put it mildly, plentiful enough in the countries of the Western camp?

Thank you for your attention.