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**STATEMENT BY
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RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS ON MILITARY
SECURITY AND ARMS CONTROL, AT THE 1035th PLENARY MEETING OF
THE OSCE FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION**

8 February 2023

**Agenda item: Security Dialogue
Subject: OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security**

Mr. Chairperson,

We appreciate the opportunity to exchange assessments of the implementation of the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security. We note the interesting reports by the keynote speakers and thank them for their contributions to the discussion.

The end of the Cold War and bloc confrontation offered unprecedented opportunities for overcoming the division of Europe. The Russian Federation has firmly adhered to the policy of building a common space of peace and stability based on the principles of equal co-operation and mutual trust, without relying on a balance of threats and counter-threats. We advocated the demilitarization of relations in Europe and the removal of the threat or use of force from the pan-European security equation. With advances in arms control, it appeared that bloc-based approaches and dividing lines had started to become a thing of the past.

Unfortunately, very soon after the adoption of the Code of Conduct at the Budapest CSCE Summit, it became clear that the hopes of building a collective architecture were not to be.

On 24 March 1999, NATO countries unleashed a war against Yugoslavia in violation of the fundamental norms of the Charter of the United Nations, the Helsinki Final Act and the Code of Conduct. Nothing was left of the principles prohibiting not only the use of force in relations between States but also the threat of its use. The same thing happened with the principles of territorial integrity, the inviolability of borders and the resolution of international disputes by peaceful means.

The violation of international law in Iraq was striking. The United States administration holds the patent on the invention of a new pretext for war: it is enough to show white powder from the podium of the United Nations and declare it a chemical weapon to deliberately deceive the international community. The violation of Iraq's sovereignty in 2003 demonstrated a clear disregard for international law and its cynical substitution for the rule of force. As a consequence, the occupied territory of Iraq was turned into a sea of

blood with hundreds of thousands dead. Almost 20 years after the war, peace has not been restored in Iraq, nor in the Middle East as a whole.

The threat of the use of force, already considered unacceptable 40 years ago at the dawn of the Helsinki process, has now become a commonplace phenomenon for Western States. The United States of America and its Western allies have resorted to it a dozen times over the past quarter century.

No less destructive was the NATO countries' choice to expand the Alliance to include the countries of Central and Eastern Europe at the expense of the development and strengthening of pan-European institutions, above all the OSCE. This was in violation of paragraph 3 of the Code of Conduct, which enshrines the fundamental principle of the indivisibility of security and not strengthening one's security at the expense of the security of other States.

For many years, the Russian Federation has voiced serious concerns about Western countries' disregard for its legitimate security interests. We have repeatedly tried to encourage our opponents to engage in a substantive and mutually respectful dialogue as equals on how to build security in Europe collectively. However, the process of NATO enlargement has come into obvious conflict with the interests of collective security and has meant that the dividing lines in Europe have not only not faded, but have deepened and moved eastward, right up to Russia's borders.

On 17 May 1990, NATO Secretary General Manfred Wörner said: "The very fact that we are ready not to deploy NATO troops beyond the territory of the Federal Republic [of Germany] gives the Soviet Union firm security guarantees." Where are these guarantees? More than 30 years later, we have received no intelligible response to this question, and proposals by the Russian Federation to sign legally binding treaties on security guarantees with the United States and NATO have been arrogantly rejected by our former partners. The Western countries have chosen the path of confrontation. How does this, in particular, relate to the principle, enshrined in paragraph 4 of the Code, that "participating States will base their mutual security relations upon a co-operative approach"?

Under these circumstances, we were forced to opt for national security based on Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations in order to eliminate the NATO-generated threats to the Russian Federation from the territory of Ukraine. All objectives of the special military operation will be accomplished.

Mr. Chairperson,

Today, the anti-Russian thrust of the activities of this well-known group of OSCE participating States is beyond doubt. We are talking not only about the progressive implementation of the policy of "containment" vis-à-vis the Russian Federation in order to inflict maximum damage, but also about the increasingly loudly proclaimed "dream" of the collapse of our country. We are ready to administer a fitting rebuke to those maligning Russia.

It is no longer a secret that the long-term goal of the United States and its allies in Ukraine is to defeat Russia on the battlefield at any cost and by proxy. Given this approach, no price, including that of a humanitarian nature, is too great for them.

In violation of paragraph 19 of the OSCE Code of Conduct, the collective West has been fuelling military action in Ukraine, openly dissuading the leadership in Kyiv from conducting negotiations with the Russian Government and pumping the Kyiv regime with offensive weapons since 2014. It has gotten to the point that, in pursuit of its geopolitical "dream" and in defiance of paragraph 6 of the Code of Conduct, the West is supporting terrorist acts. For example, the "civilized world" refused to condemn the murder of

Russian journalist Darya Dugina by the Ukrainian Security Service in front of her father, as well as the terrorist attack on the Crimean Bridge, which killed citizens of our country.

In line with their policy of justifying the crimes of fascist collaborators, Western countries close their eyes to the whitewashing and glorification of Nazism in Ukraine, where torchlight marches and the glorification of Nazi collaborators from the Second World War have become the norm. This violates paragraph 17 of the Code of Conduct.

That is not all, though. Since the start of the special military operation on 24 February last year, the international community has witnessed the monstrous war crimes of Ukrainian troops trained by military instructors from NATO member States. They use Ukrainian civilians as human shields, place military equipment and firing points in civilian infrastructure facilities and move military personnel and military cargo in medical and other non-specialized vehicles with non-military markings. The number of daily violations of the norms and principles of international humanitarian law by the authorities in Kyiv is off the charts, in contravention of paragraphs 30, 31 and 34 of the Code of Conduct.

A shocking example of the Kyiv regime's crimes was the brutal massacre of pro-Russian civilians near Kupiansk in the Kharkiv region after the withdrawal of Russian forces. Captured Nazis from the Azov battalion confess how they prevented the evacuation of civilians in Mariupol by shooting at civilian cars and "clearing out" residential areas with civilians.

Horrifying footage has been received by Russian human rights activists. From unknown accounts on social media, anonymous people show the mothers of Russian prisoners of war videos of their sons being abused and threaten to kill them if they do not receive a ransom. In Ukrainian prisons, the wounded are abused, not given proper medical care and their suffering is exacerbated in every way possible. Foreign mercenaries and Ukrainian neo-Nazis shoot unarmed Russian soldiers and officers and torture and beat prisoners of war.

The Western community of States baselessly accuses Russia of violating international humanitarian law, but for some reason none of them has thought about whether the war crimes committed by neo-Nazi armed formations currently being witnessed are acceptable. The lack of reaction from the United States and other NATO countries to the Kyiv regime's trampling of international humanitarian law once again confirms their direct involvement in the conflict.

All these acts of criminal lawlessness committed by the Kyiv regime with the backing of the West will not go unpunished. They are being carefully recorded. The organizers and perpetrators will face inevitable punishment.

We urge the OSCE participating States, the United Nations, the International Committee of the Red Cross and other relevant international organizations to exert influence on the Ukrainian Government, take effective measures to prevent criminal acts by Ukrainian armed formations against the civilian population and stop the abuse of captive Russian soldiers and the desecration of the bodies of the dead.

Mr. Chairperson,

We reject the sweeping accusations voiced today by Western delegations against our country in connection with the special military operation. The Russian Ministry of Defence and other security structures attach great importance to familiarizing our armed forces personnel with the law of armed conflict and to monitoring its rigorous implementation, while the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation contains measures providing for criminal liability for offences against international humanitarian law. The penalties

for these acts are particularly severe. The regulatory and legal framework is being constantly updated and enhanced, and all the adopted and updated programmes, norms and mechanisms are reflected in detail under paragraph 4 in Russia's responses to the Code of Conduct Questionnaire.

Despite the difficult situation in the field of European security, we consider it necessary to continue the dialogue on the implementation of the Code. We reaffirm the interest of the Russian Federation in developing international co-operation on its issues and look forward to the practical implementation of the norms enshrined in the Code in a broad international context.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.