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Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY  
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RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS ON MILITARY  
SECURITY AND ARMS CONTROL, AT THE 1063rd PLENARY MEETING OF  
THE OSCE FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION**

22 November 2023

**On the adoption of the agenda for the 1063rd Plenary Meeting of the  
OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation**

Madam Chairperson,

The delegation of the Russian Federation objects to the adoption of the agenda for the 1063rd Plenary Meeting of the OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) and would like to state the following.

The OSCE participating State that exercises, on a rotating basis, the functions of the FSC Chairmanship is meant to ensure that this autonomous decision-making body can work in an efficient and thoughtful manner, guided by the principles of impartiality and maximum consideration for the opinions of all delegations. However, careful analysis of the statement by the Canadian Chairmanship at the 1062nd Plenary Meeting regarding the FSC's mandate and the Rules of Procedure of the OSCE awakens justifiable concerns over the future course of discussions on pan-European security matters.

It must be said at the outset that the current round of negotiations has witnessed an intensification of the trends towards a crisis at the FSC, which was originally conceived by its founders as the main and, in effect, only Europe-wide structure responsible for politico-military stability on the continent.

What do we see today? Ever more persistent attempts to draw the Forum into the orbit of NATO, a narrow group of States that is by no means minded to pursue co-operation in the field of security but, rather, is merely deepening the dividing lines between delegations. However, the NATO and EU camp does not and cannot have a monopoly on the setting of priorities for the FSC's work.

We are closely following the way in which the Canadian Chairmanship is doing everything it can to try to maintain that there is somehow a legitimate basis for discussing issues at the FSC that have no bearing whatsoever on its remit. What is more, delegations are being asked to buy into a certain modernized interpretation of the Forum's mandate, which, as it turns out, is supposed to cover pretty much "all security issues". That is not so.

The FSC was created in accordance with the Helsinki Document 1992 of the CSCE as an integrated platform for negotiations on arms control, disarmament and confidence- and security-building. Its mission is to expand and intensify inter-State co-operation on issues related to military security and reducing the risk and threat of conflict. Furthermore, the participants in the FSC are tasked with establishing among themselves new security relations based upon common approaches. This strategic vision of the FSC's true purpose is duly elaborated in the Lisbon Document 1996 of the OSCE, the Astana Summit declaration of 2010 and in numerous decisions of the Organization's Ministerial Council. Unfortunately, contrary to the instructions of our predecessors, instead of looking for unifying approaches, our Canadian colleagues, supported by the NATO-EU delegations, are feeding a tendency towards fragmentation of the Forum.

We should also like to draw the attention of the Chairmanship and the participating States to a document prepared by the OSCE Secretariat entitled "Consolidated references to the OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation mandates" (FSC.GAL/145/21/Rev.1), in which it is laid down that the platform's overriding task is to "increase military security and stability in the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian areas". In that regard, the FSC's sphere of activity is delimited most clearly: it covers not only arms control and politico-military confidence-building measures, but also a wide range of issues related to the management of stockpiles of small arms and light weapons (SALW) (which includes, of course, preventing the diversion of SALW to black markets) and implementation of the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security and United Nations Security Council resolutions 1540 and 1325. What is more, Decision No. 3 adopted by the OSCE Ministerial Council in Bucharest in 2001 makes it quite clear that the FSC is meant to address only "those aspects of new security challenges which fall within its mandate".

We may therefore legitimately ask the Canadian Chairmanship: what is the situation with regard to the implementation of existing OSCE politico-military commitments? Are our Canadian colleagues facilitating that process? Did the participating States hold the annual meeting to assess implementation of the Vienna Document 2011 on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures this year? Did they reach consensus on a meeting of the Heads of Verification Centres? Did they organize a review of the implementation of the OSCE Documents on SALW and Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition (SCA)? Are the FSC working groups operating?

The answer to every one of these questions must be "no". Instead of concerning itself with the implementation of the entire array of commitments undertaken at the FSC, the Canadian Chairmanship is inviting the experts in the field of conventional arms control present in this room to retrain at short notice as military medics (as was the case at the most recent joint meeting of the FSC and the OSCE Permanent Council) or as cybersecurity specialists (as is the case today).

Accordingly, it is not surprising that, in the past few years, the OSCE has been floundering in its status as a regional arrangement under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. Let me cite just one eloquent example. In New York the member countries of the United Nations are able to muster the necessary political courage and find common ground regarding the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in SALW. In Vienna, in contrast, over the past two years there has been a reversal of the progress previously made in the implementation of SALW/SCA-related commitments. However, this does not in the least trouble the FSC's Anglo-Saxon wing, which is doing everything it can to sweep under the carpet its violations of export control regimes and the rules for responsible arms transfers to conflict zones.

Today's meeting is the fruit of the aforementioned approaches. The Canadian Chairmanship is inviting delegations to consider the topic of disinformation in the context of military combat, including through the prism of "gender". I shall skip over the fact that it is not quite clear to us what that is supposed to mean. I would merely remind you that the Commander of the Medical Forces of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, Tetiana Ostashchenko, whom the Canadian Chairmanship had invited as a panellist to the

89th Joint Meeting of the FSC and the OSCE Permanent Council, was dismissed from her post a few days ago. There is information indicating that volunteers and military medics had been complaining about her for a long time because of the complete incompetence she showed in her work. Or perhaps the decision to sack her was a consequence of her having ladled out yet another serving of disinformation at that joint FSC-Permanent Council meeting? Had she been following in the footsteps of that famous propagandist the former Ombudsperson of Ukraine, Liudmyla Denisova? From this alone it is clear that there is enough disinformation at the OSCE as it is without the need for separate thematic meetings. We have no intention of taking part in such political vaudevilles.

We are obliged to say a few words, too, about the Canadian Chairmanship's interpretation of the Rules of Procedure of the OSCE. The paragraphs you mentioned, including paragraph IV.1(C)1, do not at all regulate the adoption of an agenda for joint meetings of the FSC and the OSCE Permanent Council. However, that matter is covered by paragraph IV.1(C)3 as regards the Permanent Council, and by paragraph IV.1(C)4 as regards the FSC. It is clear that the Co-Chairpersons are meant to ensure the good order and smooth running of joint meetings of the two bodies, but how is the question of agreeing upon the agenda dealt with in this case? If we go by information from the OSCE Secretariat that the Russian delegation has in its possession, then it has long been the custom and established practice for the agenda of a joint meeting to be adopted by the meeting, and not by the Chairperson. Which means that joint meetings are conducted according to FSC rules, all the more so since the agenda for such meetings contains a Security Dialogue agenda item that is traditionally associated with the Forum. In the light of what has been said, we consider political trickery with the Rules of Procedure to be out of order.

In closing, allow me to sum up the Russian approaches.

First, in times of crisis the FSC is meant to remain a platform for dialogue on politico-military security issues, where the conversation is conducted on the basis of equality and mutual consideration of the interests of all participating States. We will seek to have the Forum's programme of work brought in line with its very clear politico-military mandate. We take the position that it is essential for Russian panellists to be fairly and equally represented at meetings.

Secondly, the Russian delegation has officially submitted for consideration by the Canadian Chairmanship a proposal on convening a plenary FSC meeting in the format of a Security Dialogue devoted to the politico-military challenges of European security, with the participation of representatives of the Collective Security Treaty Organization, NATO and the European Union. That proposal remains in force. As in the past, we regard the consideration of ways to achieve de-escalation and prevent military incidents to be a key objective. We are convinced of the urgent need to hold such an event, which would enable the Forum's extensive potential to be unlocked.

Thirdly, our assessments of the Forum's work plan are aimed, above all, at making interactions between the delegations more effective and at ridding the dialogue here of anachronistic politicized clichés. We call upon the incoming Cypriot FSC Chairmanship to reflect on how to sensibly calibrate its programme of work for this autonomous OSCE decision-making body in the first trimester of 2024.

Madam Chairperson,

Taken together, all the aspects brought up today mean that the necessary conditions are not in place for the Russian delegation to join a consensus regarding the entire meeting agenda, including the item "General statements" and a discussion of the situation in Ukraine, where the corrupt Kyiv regime is heading for the abyss.

Thank you for your attention.