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Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY
MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1377th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

9 June 2022

**In response to the remarks by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe,
Marija Pejčinović Burić**

Madam Secretary General,

We listened to your statement with interest. Frankly, the points you made confirm that the Council of Europe has altogether lost its independence and truly pan-European identity. Neoliberal dogmatism, double standards and Russophobia have turned one of the oldest organizations into an ideological appendage of the European Union and caused it to fall prey to bloc-based approaches. Nothing whatsoever is left of its unifying principles.

It is regrettable that the Council of Europe is becoming increasingly involved in the West's hybrid confrontation with our country. The outcomes of the annual session of the Committee of Ministers held in Turin on 19 and 20 May confirmed this. All the other historical areas of that organization's work are being put on the back burner. The empty decisions from Turin are clear evidence of this. What will remain of the Palace of Europe once the fury against Russia has abated?

For now, in Strasbourg they continue to ignore and shield the crimes of the Kyiv regime, making it out to be an innocent "victim". Moreover, the Council of Europe is assuming a leading position in efforts to hold Russia accountable on fabricated charges. It is laying the legal and institutional foundations for destructive steps behind which, as is all too obvious, is an attempt to take out anger on or settle political scores with Russia. The direction chosen could have the most regrettable consequences with regard to preserving the integrity of the legal and humanitarian space.

This lamentable state of affairs has compelled Russia to leave the Council of Europe. Attempts to present the situation as if our country had been "expelled" from that organization are a clear breach of its Statute and, more generally, of the principle of the rule of law. Unless I am mistaken, this very rule of law was one of the three core "values" of the Council of Europe. Unfortunately, the degradation of fundamental principles and values in the heat of Russophobia continues. Attempts to curtail or even completely deprive us of the legitimate right to take part in "open" conventions do not subside. The rupture with Strasbourg is long overdue. Our path and that of the Council of Europe were diverging inexorably. The events concerning Ukraine have merely brought the inevitable closer.

We would remind you that the Ukrainian Government's reneging on its obligations under international law, the cultivation of neo-Nazi ideas and hatred of all things Russian, the suppression of freedom of speech and dissent, and the threat of physical annihilation of the population of Donbas led to a situation that required decisive action to save civilian lives. We lament that the leadership of the Council of Europe over many years preferred simply not to take notice of the aforementioned tendencies. Quite the opposite, they helped to exacerbate anti-Russian rhetoric in every possible way. We are obliged to note that you, Madam Secretary General, were directly involved in that campaign. We warned you on more than one occasion about the disastrous consequences of participating in the so-called summit of the "Crimean Platform". And how is one to explain your visit to Ukraine on 9 May of all dates?

Such clear pandering to the discriminatory practices of the Kyiv regime was designed, it would seem, to open a pan-European Pandora's box, where it was permitted to violate anything one wished to suit the political agenda, and where someone else would be criticized for that simply to divert attention from the crux of the problem. What fictitious "aggression", pray, justifies discrimination against one's own citizens of different nationalities who were being made to fit by force into the Procrustean bed of Ukrainian identity? What "aggression" can serve as justification for the killing of residents of Donbas by Ukrainian armed formations on account of their dissent over a period of eight years?

As is known, on 16 March our country's participation in the Statute and all international treaties of the Council of Europe was terminated; the parties to these treaties are strictly limited to member States of that organization. This is also true of the European Convention on Human Rights. The attempts by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe to extend the applicability of that convention and thereby also the jurisdiction of the European Court of Human Rights over Russia (until September of this year) are devoid of any legal basis.

Against this background, the Council of Europe is shirking its task to defend human rights. We are deeply concerned by the lack of an international response to outrageous instances of Russophobia in States situated within the areas of responsibility of both the Council of Europe and the OSCE. It is not so much a matter of isolated incidents as of a targeted campaign to "cancel" Russia, supported officially in several capitals. Alarming reports are reaching us that the wave of Russophobia has not passed by the Secretariat headed by you, which was once devoted to combating discrimination.

Russia's exit from the Council of Europe has radically discredited it as an organization for the defence and upholding of the noble principles of protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The decline of that organization has in many respects been facilitated by overt politicization, by the fact that its high-ranking representatives have hushed up the problems of neo-Nazism and discrimination against Russians in the Baltic countries, among other places. Instead, the Commissioner for Human Rights, Dunja Mijatović, preferred to churn out false information about the situation of the Crimean Tatars in Russian Crimea in a way that verged on justification of terrorism and extremism.

In view of the precipitous degradation of the Council of Europe, we had pinned certain hopes on the OSCE's human dimension. Unfortunately, here too we met with a fiasco owing to the Polish Chairmanship's failure to act as an "honest broker" and to the blinkered bias of a number of our Organization's executive structures.

One final point. Over many years, appeals were consistently voiced in this room for the focus to shift from confrontation to aspects where the two organizations could pool their efforts. This is called for, in particular, by a Permanent Council decision from 2005 (PC.DEC/670) which specifies four priority areas for co-operation between the OSCE and the Council of Europe (the fight against terrorism and combating

trafficking in human beings, the rights of national minorities, tolerance and non-discrimination). It is sad that we were ultimately not heard.

Thank you for your attention.