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RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE JOINT MEETING OF THE FORUM
FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION AND THE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

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Mr. Chairman of the Forum,
Madam Chairperson of the Permanent Council,

It is a great honour for me to speak before such an authoritative audience, and I thank you for this opportunity.

Sixty years ago, Winston Churchill, contemplating the fate of the world in Fulton, wondered whether the United States of America would be able to deal responsibly with the superpower status it had gained. In a recent joint article, the Chancellor of Germany, Mrs. Angela Merkel, and the President of France, Mr. Nicolas Sarkozy, noted that today “no country is capable of resolving the world’s problems on its own” and that “security policy must be defined more broadly”. These comments symbolize the huge distance that has been covered in the evolution of ideas on international security.

There is no shortage of examples in contemporary history of how the international community, in the face of harsh reality, has broken free from the Procrustean bed of ideological preferences and has acted decisively and jointly on a radically new basis. The tragic events of 11 September and the current global financial crisis are typical examples, and the responses to them have demonstrated the need for new arrangements for the pooling of efforts beyond traditional alliances and associations and the creation of the broadest coalitions to counter the risks of a globalizing world and a globalizing security environment.

There is also no doubt that this kind of co-operation is required in the fight against terrorism to establish peace in the Middle East and Afghanistan, to reliably eliminate the danger of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and to deal with the effects of climate change.

It is, however, also true that in the Euro-Atlantic area — precisely the area where one would think there is the densest and most comprehensive network of mutual commitments and inter-institutional links — the objective need for radically new approaches to safeguarding security has not been sufficiently backed by concrete actions to form a genuinely collective security system. The Helsinki breakthrough towards new principles of inter-State relations in the area of security was unable ultimately to overcome the Cold War

mentality of dividing countries into “us” and “them”. The fundamental values for Euro-Atlantic security — observance of the norms of international law, the non-use of force, respect for sovereignty, the inviolability of borders and territorial integrity, commitment to the peaceful resolution of conflicts, and arms control — have not only not been fully developed but in a number of cases have suffered erosion and have been weakened as real instruments for ensuring security. Military operations in the Balkans, the recognition of Kosovo, the disastrous events in the Trans-Caucasus in August 2008, the crisis surrounding the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE Treaty) and the stagnation of the confidence-building regimes, to mention but a few examples, attest to the weakness of the modern-day Euro-Atlantic security architecture.

It is important to draw another lesson from all these events: to regard the “centralism” of NATO or any other body, cultivated on the basis of so-called regional, historical or civilization-based “exclusivity”, as the ultimate approach cannot and will not be a “panacea” for strengthening European security. On the contrary, it creates divisions in Europe, increases tension and gives rise to disunity in the relations between and the actions of members of the Euro-Atlantic community. Established as a mechanism for generating a genuine atmosphere of confidence, the NATO-Russia Council proved impenetrable for the Russian Federation during the hot days of August. Moreover, the Alliance attempted to deprive Russia of the inalienable right of any organization, namely that of being heard, and also reproached it for having effectively and convincingly repelled the military adventure undertaken by the Georgian leadership, a “valued partner” of NATO. It is clear that with such an ideology-driven basis it is impossible to create a network of partnerships that the leaders of many countries believe to be necessary today in order to pool “our political, economic and military capabilities and ability to provide development aid”. This last quote is from the article by Nicolas Sarkozy and Angela Merkel that I mentioned earlier.

Now let me say a few words about arms control. It is precisely in this area that the OSCE can play an exclusive role in shaping the new Euro-Atlantic security architecture. The Organization has the appropriate negotiation forums, experience and tools. Arms control represents a real way of strengthening security. We have invested more than others in it and are ready to continue to do so in the future. This concerns not only the “Vienna package” but also strategic armaments and other subjects being discussed in Geneva. However, it is important for us to understand whether others see this instrument as we do: greater security with fewer resources. Are we all ready to continue to translate our political intentions into the comprehensible and objective language of figures, areas of deployment, information exchange and verification regimes, and measures of restraint? Are we ready to harmonize our plans for military development on the basis of shared assessments of the security situation?

Let us be honest — in recent years, some countries have tried to reduce the problem of European conventional arms control to a discussion about the depots in Kolbasna (Transdnistria), which need to be safeguarded in one way or another, and the presence of military pensioners at the former military base in Gudauta. As a result, the “cornerstone” of European security has lost any link whatsoever with the politico-military reality. The restoration of the CFE regime now requires not only the ratification of the Agreement on Adaptation of the Treaty but also the adoption of other far-reaching measures needed to ensure its viability given the new conditions. One can only regret how much has been sacrificed to this one-sided approach and how far we could all have progressed in strengthening the material basis for European security if the adapted CFE Treaty had entered

into force in 2001 or 2002, as was envisaged in the agreement reached at the Istanbul summit in 1999.

The situation is no better as regards confidence-building measures. There has been protracted discussion in the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) for several years now on Russian proposals concerning the extension of confidence-building measures to multinational forces and naval activities. They have not had the expected results. We support the proposal by the German Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Frank-Walter Steinmeier, to hold a special meeting on the CFE Treaty this summer. We look forward to a resumption of the detailed discussion within the Forum of the entire range of issues connected with the actual role of arms control instruments in the changing security conditions. It would be appropriate to give some thought to why in the early 1990s, when the danger of a military clash as a means of solving political problems had already ceased to be an issue, the OSCE was able to draw up an ambitious agenda in the form of the "Programme of Immediate Action" in the area of arms control. Why have the Organization's activities in this area become so wretchedly deadlocked today?

In a word, in an area in which the role of the OSCE could scarcely be replaced by any other format, there is a need to resume most serious dialogue not only on the specific aspects of arms control regimes but also on their role and place as an instrument for ensuring security in the new circumstances.

It is significant that discussions during the recent brainstorming session at the 45th Munich Conference on Security Policy highlighted the growing dissatisfaction on the part of the leaders of the Euro-Atlantic countries with the state of affairs in the pan-European security landscape.

Today, the window of opportunity for intensifying strategic dialogue in the Russia-European Union-United States triangle gives all of us an additional impetus for reconsidering the situation in our common area and "reloading the Euro-Atlantic security matrix".

We believe that the best way of doing this is to follow up the initiative of the President of the Russian Federation, Mr. Dmitry Medvedev, regarding the joint elaboration and conclusion of a treaty on European security. We invite you to sit down at the negotiating table and agree on intelligible "rules of the game". We see the future treaty as a kind of "Helsinki plus" — the confirmation and development in a legally binding format of the principles of inter-State relations agreed upon earlier, the elaboration of instruments and mechanisms for their practical application, a reassessment of the arms control situation, the agreement of uniform criteria and mechanisms for conflict prevention and their resolution by peaceful means, and a new form of co-operation to counter modern-day global threats to security in the area from Vancouver to Vladivostok.

The informal talks at the Ministerial Council meeting in Helsinki, the purposeful discussion in Munich and our bilateral contacts are evidence that the need for this kind of "matrix reloading" in the wider sense is not disputed by the majority of countries. The fact is that this dialogue is in essence already under way. What is called for above all today are new and fresh ideas, concrete proposals and thoughts, a critical plan even. Russia has already presented its suggestions, and we look forward to a constructive intellectual contribution from our partners.

We have no claims to the absolute truth. The main task is to draw up a legally binding document based on complete respect for the interests of every State in the pan-European area and recognition of their equal rights when it comes to ensuring security. No one should strengthen their security at the expense of the security of others. This evocation of the principle of the indivisibility of security should be enshrined in the treaty.

We believe that the procedure for drawing up the Treaty should be as open and as democratic as possible. We invite all countries, including the United States and Canada, and also all the security organizations in our common area — this means NATO, the OSCE, the European Union (EU), the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the Commonwealth of Independent States — to agree on how to live here and how to ensure their security in such a way that it does not create risks and threats to the security of others.

Many partners wonder about the “added value” of a new treaty. Some say that before we create new mechanisms and commitments the old ones should first of all be implemented in good faith. We are open to the idea of looking together into the reasons why earlier commitments are frequently implemented selectively and partially. Russia is ready for a broad-based and honest discussion. In the course of this discussion, as was already mentioned, we should take stock of the existing commitments in the politico-military sphere, identify the gaps and, possibly, strengthen those agreements that meet the challenges and needs of today. In that connection, it is important to avoid arbitrary interpretations in the spirit of so-called “political expediency”. What is needed above all today are clear, precise and uniform criteria. This concerns, among other things, the lack of genuinely effective mechanisms and uniform principles for the prevention and resolution of conflict and crisis situations.

We agree that the existence of mutual trust is the key to substantive dialogue. The lack of trust is at the root of many of the problems today in the pan-European area. However, this trust cannot be achieved without open and honest dialogue.

We share the view that today’s security problems are multidisciplinary in nature and call for a comprehensive approach. However, does this mean that we should try to squeeze all the aspects of security — economic, environmental and human rights — into the framework of a single treaty? And indeed, is this fundamentally attainable or will it not lead to a dispersal of efforts? We believe it is important here to set clear priorities and to be guided primarily by pragmatic considerations.

After the adoption of the Helsinki Final Act, we achieved significant progress in the economic and human dimensions together. Not one country in the Euro-Atlantic area calls into question the political commitments adopted within the OSCE in the human dimension. The dialogue in this area is noted for its intensity, as can be seen, it might be noted, from the nature of the decisions adopted at the Ministerial Council meeting in Helsinki in December last year. Yes, there are still issues concerning the “third basket”. However, there are other formats, working formats, to resolve and examine further aspects of comprehensive security in the broad sense of this term. I should like to point out in particular that the Council of Europe, for example, is devising legally binding instruments, while the OSCE negotiation forums in the politico-military dimension are simply standing idle.

It is for precisely that reason, in our view, that we now need focused, substantive consideration, first and foremost, of the issue of “hard security”, on which the pan-European political climate depends to a decisive extent. Only in this way will it be possible to correct the OSCE’s failure in this area, which is undermining one of the foundations of its work in general — the comprehensive nature of its approaches to ensuring security. It might be noted that this kind of approach does not rule out the possibility of including in the scope of the new treaty certain topics that go beyond the politico-military framework in the classic sense of the term. For example, we believe it will be useful to include provisions in the treaty that reshape the character of co-operation in countering new threats, including terrorism in particular.

The change in the nature of modern-day threats is having a most serious effect on how organizations operating in the Euro-Atlantic area evolve. New functions and tasks are being sought, instruments are being created and tested to back them up. However, the globalization of the ambitions of these organizations merely emphasizes the increasing imbalance between the global nature of the problems and the fact that action and decisions are taken by small groups. I reiterate that neither energy security nor cyber security nor stabilization in Afghanistan — and I could go on — can be ensured without the pooling of efforts on the part of all players in the area. If, however, paramount importance continues to be given to ensuring that decisions that may effect the interests of other countries in the Euro-Atlantic region can be taken with a completely free hand, or that access to the decision-making process is strictly on a selective or ad hoc basis, dividing lines will only multiply and appear in other security dimensions. A new dividing line of this type was drawn in the initial conception of the plans for the establishment of a third deployment area of the United States global anti-missile defence system in Europe. Then there is the question of energy co-operation, which over the decades has formed the basis of European security and which has been placed outside the confines of ideological differences, enabling it to function reliably without interruption even during periods of the most serious political upheaval. We cannot allow this positive interdependence in the energy sector to be destroyed by politically motivated approaches.

The establishment of common rules in relations between States with regard to security in the Euro-Atlantic area through the conclusion of a treaty on European security will make it possible to use inter-institutional partnerships more effectively and to concentrate the by no means unlimited resources on solving problems that are common to us all.

The OSCE must serve as a forum for the discussion of the urgent problems of pan-European security and the elaboration of major decisions to determine the way in which inter-State relations develop throughout our common area. This function, thanks to which the OSCE has gained considerable authority over the years, should be revived.

At the same time, we do not see the OSCE as the one and only forum for the elaboration of the treaty. A wide variety of multilateral formats could prove useful — the proposed Russia-EU dialogue and also, over the longer term, the NATO-Russia Council, although in this case needless to say only in the event of the complete revival of the Rome formula, whereby all 27 members of the NATO-Russia Council participate in the joint discussion and elaboration of decisions on problems of mutual interest with the same rights and in a national capacity.

As for a possible concrete contribution by the OSCE, the Forum for Security Co-operation should be singled out as unquestionably the leading body in the development of the basic parameters for arms control and reasonable military sufficiency. Clearly, this is only one of the sets of questions that could be regulated by the future treaty. Its provisions should establish a common politico-legal framework and principal areas for the improvement of European arms control in the future. Consequently, it would be useful to include in the treaty brief but succinct basic principles for the development of the regimes of arms control, confidence-building, restraint and reasonable sufficiency in military development.

What is most important is that the Russian initiative does not contemplate the destruction of the institutions already in existence or the abandonment of existing security agreements and arrangements. In particular, the “disarmament” section of the new treaty does not and is not intended in any way to replace the CFE Treaty, the Treaty on Open Skies or the Vienna Document 1999.

At the initiative of the European Union, a section entitled the “Platform for Co-operative Security” was included in the Charter for European Security adopted at the Istanbul Summit. This by no means obsolete document, which contains principles and rules for non-hierarchical relations among international organizations in the Euro-Atlantic region, should be employed more actively to establish dialogue among all the organizations concerned with Euro-Atlantic security. Thought might also be given to the possibility of adapting and updating this document in line with the new conditions.

We believe that the Annual Security Review Conference (ASRC), which on this occasion could be conducted at the foreign minister level, could well be an important milestone in the consideration of the key issues involved in modernizing the Euro-Atlantic architecture. Mr. Sergey Lavrov’s schedule already includes participation in the ASRC. We are grateful to the Greek Chairmanship for its willingness to organize a separate special high-level meeting on these issues.

We are convinced that the Euro-Atlantic community of academics and experts, respected non-governmental organizations and parliamentary circles could also make a significant contribution to this work.

It is important to develop and give substance to concrete dialogue among the countries of the Euro-Atlantic area, in particular within the framework of the Security Dialogue, which is a highly relevant ongoing item on the OSCE Forum’s agenda.

Thank you for your attention.