

The OSCE Secretariat bears no responsibility for the content of this document and circulates it without altering its content. The distribution by OSCE Conference Services of this document is without prejudice to OSCE decisions, as set out in documents agreed by OSCE participating States.

PC.DEL/1608/21
21 October 2021

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE
1340th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

21 October 2021

On “Our Rules – the Charter of the United Nations”

Madam Chairperson,

The next anniversary of the entry into force of the Charter of the United Nations, signed in San Francisco in 1945, takes place on 24 October. The document drew a line under the two destructive world wars of the twentieth century and laid the foundations for the world order’s modern architecture. It created the conditions under international law for life in peacetime. It was an exceptional achievement by humanity and a manifestation of faith in its best aspirations.

We should also pay tribute to the Charter, since it is largely due to the spirit and the letter of its Chapter VIII that the OSCE exists as a regional arrangement called upon to help maintain international peace and security and build inter-State communication on the principles of equality under the central co-ordinating role of the United Nations. As such, the OSCE should carry out its activities, especially in the field of conflict prevention, in close co-operation with the United Nations. This was confirmed, in particular, in paragraph 25 of the 1992 CSCE Helsinki Summit Declaration.

The Charter of the United Nations is the framework structure on which fundamental documents, including the Helsinki Final Act, the Charter of Paris for a New Europe, the Charter for European Security, the Astana declaration and many others, are based.

More than ever, the global erosion of trust that we are witnessing today requires due compliance with international treaties and obligations. Double standards, selfishness and stereotypical thinking destroy the fabric of healthy interaction between States. Against this backdrop, attempts by some countries to promote the dubious concept of a “rules-based world order” as opposed to the universal principles of international law are extremely worrying. Our Swedish colleagues have gone a step further and proposed a kind of “European security order” as one of the priorities of their Chairmanship. And yet no one is able to explain clearly what order and what rules they are talking about.

The lack of clarity seems to have been deliberately created to stretch the political ideology behind this pseudo-legal concept. Effectively, the West is profiling itself as the only legitimate decision-making

centre. This will inevitably deepen the divide between countries convinced of their own superiority and the rest of the world.

Once again, we should like to warn against eroding the central role of the United Nations as the guarantor of peaceful development when the interests of States differ. Attempts to impose a bloc mentality run the risk of causing new geopolitical upheavals. All this is a dubious form of self-affirmation that has much in common with a neocolonial frame of mind. The architects are keen to apply these secretly agreed “rules” on a global scale. And yet no one has put these States in charge of reshaping the system of international relations.

At the Permanent Council we often hear about the indisputable authority of the Helsinki Final Act. Russia traditionally supports this view. In our opinion, the principles formulated 46 years ago have not lost their relevance. Surprisingly, in recent years we rarely recall the tenth principle “Fulfilment in good faith of obligations under international law”, which states, among other things, that all the Helsinki principles should be equally and unreservedly applied. We note that the term “international law” itself has been carefully removed from circulation through the introduction of some “compendium of rules”. This is a direct route to legal anarchy. In fact, the concept of a “rules-based world order” deliberately creates a grey area in international affairs, where force takes precedence over the rule of law.

It is worth recalling the Russian initiative for a treaty on European security, which aimed at guaranteeing observance of the principle of indivisible security. Just over a decade ago, we invited participating States to reaffirm the *de jure* principles of the indivisibility of security and the commitment not to strengthen their own security at the expense of the security of others, as enshrined in OSCE political decisions.

As many are well aware, we started from the need to ensure the unity of the entire Euro-Atlantic area and to create a sustainable and effective security system. We proposed that the importance of a unified interpretation of and compliance with the Helsinki Decalogue and clear procedures in crisis situations and when dealing with transnational threats should be laid down in a legally binding form. Furthermore, the treaty would have addressed the issue of restraint and reasonableness in military build-up, based on the principle of non-offensive defence and refraining from the additional permanent deployment of substantial combat forces outside national territories. Sadly, the idea was never translated into practical solutions.

Instead of strengthening the collective foundations of multilateral engagement, our Western partners have opted for NATO-centrism. By the way, in the North Atlantic Alliance there is in fact a legal framework for security issues. But why do the members of this bloc deny other States in the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian space the right to legally formalize security principles?

To prevent any possible speculation, I will state at the outset: Russia is not against rules. The Charter of the United Nations is, in fact, itself a set of rules. But with one crucial difference: it is approved by all the countries of the world, not just those who think they are the chosen ones.

The anniversary of the entry into force of the Charter is also a reminder of the tragic price humanity had to pay for defeating Nazism and shaping a just world order. In view of the worrying trends towards rewriting history, revising the outcome of the Second World War and the judgments of the Nuremberg Tribunal, attempts to replace universally recognized international law with some new “rules” pose a great danger. Painful historical analogies are unwittingly evoked – too much sacrifice was made by Europe for the liberation from the “Brown Plague”.

In conclusion, I should like to quote Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, who said: “It is much harder to accept the diversity and competition of ideas in the development of the world than to invent prescriptions for all of humanity within a narrow circle of the like-minded.” It is for that reason that we launched the campaign “Our Rules – the Charter of the United Nations” [also known as the “UN Charter is our rules” campaign] in support of the key role of this world organization in international affairs. Russia is open to honest dialogue as equals in order to build a common space of equitable co-operation and prosperity for all, founded on the highest values of justice and a balance of interests based on international law.

Thank you for your attention.