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**STATEMENT BY
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RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS ON MILITARY
SECURITY AND ARMS CONTROL, AT THE 1068th PLENARY MEETING OF
THE OSCE FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION**

31 January 2024

**Agenda item: General statements
Subject: Special military operation to demilitarize and denazify Ukraine**

Mr. Chairperson,

The “pre-war psychosis” fomented in Europe at the instigation of the United States of America and NATO, accompanied by calls for the remilitarization of the continent, is indicative of the West’s renewed focus on stepping up its military planning, resources and infrastructure for a deliberate confrontation with the Russian Federation. This is how we see the Alliance’s “Steadfast Defender 2024”, the largest coalition exercise since 1988, and the European Union’s planned manoeuvres concerning the organization of large-scale military transports in Europe to test the transport network in the event of a major conflict. The ulterior aim of the Western “stormy petrels” is to divert the taxpayers’ attention from the senseless squandering of their money in Ukraine’s corrupt “black hole”, and also to “warm” public opinion to the idea of reviving their own defence industries, which have been “de-energized” by the “Kyiv project”.

For our part, we draw attention to the statement by the bloc’s Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg that Russia “does not pose a direct threat to the members countries of the Alliance”. Much more attention in this context should be paid to the speculative plans of the United States to station tactical nuclear weapons again on the territory of the United Kingdom. We warn the US authorities against such escalation at the height of the collective West’s hybrid anti-Russian war, which we would consider as having the potential to rapidly destabilize pan-European security. We would advise our colleagues, before it is too late, to start getting rid of anti-Russian phobias, which, by their very nature, cannot be “cured” by tanks or tactical nuclear warheads.

Mr. Chairperson,

Against this background, Ukraine remains an instructive example of what the desire to follow the lead of the West, and the rejection of sovereignty and the principle of peaceful coexistence of peoples can give rise to. As Russian President Vladimir Putin said on 26 January: “On the lands that historically belonged to us, Russians were declared a non-titular nation [...]. Our geopolitical adversary realized that it would not be possible to reshape the whole of Ukraine, including the population in the south-east, the

Russian-speaking population, and that is why in 2014 they staged a coup d'état and began to exterminate, to physically exterminate all those who were determined to develop normal relations with our country." It has long been known that crimes against entire nations are a historical tradition of Euro-Atlantic military and political elites. According to the most conservative estimates, since the nineteenth century, the United States alone has tried to influence domestic political processes in at least 150 countries.

Today, the Kyiv regime, nurtured by the US Government and its satellites, poses a real threat not only to Russian but also to Ukrainian citizens. It is not the first time the regime has cruelly dispatched its own military personnel who have been taken prisoner. The international community remembers well how, on 29 July 2022, neo-Nazis launched a missile attack in cold blood from US-made HIMARS multiple-launch rocket systems against a detention facility in Elenovka (Donetsk People's Republic), killing over 50 prisoners and injuring more than 70. By the same incomprehensible logic, on 24 January the Ukrainian armed forces gave a criminal order to shoot down a Russian Il-76 military transport plane carrying 65 soldiers of the Ukrainian armed forces for exchange and the Russian crew members and officers accompanying them.

It is characteristic that in Volodymyr Zelenskyy's video address released on the same day, not a single word was said about the fact that the victims of the crash were Ukrainian citizens. The Kyiv regime knew very well that an exchange was being prepared. It knew how and by what route the prisoners of war would be transported, and the model and flight number of the aircraft. The Ukrainian General Staff's statement of 24 January is quite revelatory in that regard. It said that the Ukrainian armed forces were tracking Russia's military transport aircraft and would continue to take measures to destroy delivery systems and to control airspace, including on the Belgorod-Kharkiv front. Importantly, another aircraft with dozens of Ukrainian prisoners on board followed on after the destroyed Il-76, but luckily made it back to the departure airfield on time. Otherwise, they too could have died at the hands of the State to which they had previously sworn to perform their military service. Do the Western delegations present in this room realize that the Kyiv regime does not care who it turns its weapons against?

The Russian Investigative Committee has instituted criminal proceedings on the basis of evidence of an offence covered by Article 205 of the Russian Criminal Code (Terrorist acts). Forensic examinations have been ordered on the seized fuselage fragments and other material evidence. A set of investigative measures is being carried out to identify the persons involved in this act of terrorism. According to reports, the decoding of the aircraft's flight recorders confirms the aircraft was destroyed in mid-air. Information that the Ukrainian armed forces carried out the terrorist attack using an anti-aircraft missile system, either the US Patriot or the German-made IRIS-T, is being verified. If this is confirmed, the Western countries that supplied them will once again find themselves complicit in a crime by the Kyiv regime.

I would especially like to emphasize the following. Last week, vociferous statements were heard in this room that prisoners of war are entitled to basic rights and protection under international humanitarian law. Perhaps our colleagues will explain to us today how the destruction of an aircraft carrying prisoners of war tallies with the procedure envisaged by international humanitarian law and agreed upon in advance between Russia and the Kyiv regime. And how it is in line with your claims that Ukraine is ensuring its "legitimate right to self-defence".

This terrorist attack clearly confirms the Kyiv regime's total inability to reach an agreement. Put this into the context of the Minsk agreements used to arm Ukraine, and the Kyiv authorities' abandonment, under the pressure of their Western handlers, of the draft peace treaty that had already been initialled in Istanbul in April 2022, and it becomes clear to you why Russia, without abandoning the negotiating option in principle, continues the special military operation launched to save the lives of the inhabitants of Donbas.

Mr. Chairperson,

We once again draw the attention of the OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) to the fact that the practice of terror against civilians has been the leading doctrine of the Ukrainian armed forces since 2014. This is already becoming evident to the international community. As noted in the US magazine *The American Conservative*, the strikes by the Ukrainian armed forces on civilians in Belgorod and Donetsk suggest that “the carnage is also representative of a pattern on the part of Kiev that is becoming increasingly pronounced.” The Kyiv authorities realize that “the prospect of achieving its maximalist goals is increasingly bleak”. Apparently, this is why they continue to retaliate against people who have made a deliberate choice in favour of reunification with Russia.

Unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), which are used to “hunt” civilians, have played a special role in the Kyiv regime’s strategy. The targets of such attacks are more often places of mass gatherings of people, infrastructure facilities, and repair and construction works in front-line urban areas.

On the screens, colleagues can see the consequences of their mentees’ unprincipled attacks. On 25 January, Ukrainian UAVs dropped six explosive devices on local residents’ heads in Donetsk. Three people were injured. On 27 January, the Ukrainian armed forces hit several volunteer vehicles with drones at the entrance to the humanitarian headquarters in Novaya Kakhovka in the Kherson region, as a result of which a 70-year-old woman was seriously injured. On 28 January, the Ukrainian armed forces dropped a munition from a drone on a family in Donetsk. The man suffered serious leg wounds and was hospitalized with severe loss of blood. A total of 11 civilians from border areas were hit by Ukrainian UAV raids last week. Among the dead was a couple in Yasinovataya (Donetsk People’s Republic), whose house was simply blown apart by the Ukrainian armed forces, who dropped a mine through the chimney. The blood of dozens of dead civilians is on the hands and conscience of those who are arming the Zelenskyy regime while officially declaring that the authorities in Kyiv have the right to choose their own targets for strikes.

Drones are also used by the Ukrainian armed forces for other criminal purposes. In particular, information is currently being verified that the Ukrainian armed forces have concentrated stocks of chemical agents in the Avdiivka area, including Teren chemical grenades, which were previously used by neo-Nazis when storming Russian positions in Artemovsk and Mariupol. On 15 June 2023, near Rabotino in the Zaporozhye region, kamikaze UAVs with home-made munitions filled with a mixture of chloroacetophenone and chloropicrin – an asphyxiant and tear gas – were used against our troop positions. We do not rule out the possibility of the Ukrainian armed forces continuing to use unlawful means and methods of armed combat.

Under these circumstances, the armed forces of the Russian Federation are continuing to gradually move the front line away from Russian settlements. Last week they carried on their successful offensive in the area of Verbovoye-Rabotino (Zaporozhye region), advancing despite counter-attacks towards Soledar. We continue to conduct dozens of group strikes with long-range precision weapons against Ukrainian military-industrial complex facilities and the enemy’s military airfield infrastructure. In the past week alone, four surface-to-air missile launchers – two US Patriot launchers, a French SAMP-T and a German IRIS-T – along with three associated radar stations were successfully destroyed. Not surprisingly under these circumstances, the Ukrainian armed forces are experiencing great difficulties in repairing the tanks supplied by Germany and other NATO countries because of the catastrophic shortage of spare parts, including at repair bases in Lithuania and Poland. It is ironic how the Kyiv regime is trying to divert attention from the stalemate in the Ukrainian armed forces by discrediting the Russian military-industrial complex. But these arrogant insinuations will have no effect on the steady consolidation of our military industry. This year, the Russian armed forces will receive more than 36,000 pieces of military equipment and 16.5 million weapons – many times more than in the previous two years. This trend is only going to continue.

Mr. Chairperson,

Today, Western leaders are trying to convince their societies that the continued financing of the Kyiv regime is a profitable investment and an attractive business project. This was once again openly stated by CIA Director William J. Burns in an article for *Foreign Affairs* (30 January). Kyiv's Western sponsors apparently have yet to realize that their actions qualify as State support for terrorism.

In particular, the French Government stubbornly refuses to accept that the build-up of military aid to the Zelenskyy regime is not only prolonging the Ukrainian crisis but also resulting in the deaths of French citizens who have enlisted as auxiliaries of the Ukrainian armed forces and other regime formations. This was clearly demonstrated in a missile strike by the Russian Aerospace Forces on 16 January against a foreign mercenary base in Kharkiv, as a result of which French fighters were killed. Attempts by the French authorities to hide this from the public will accomplish nothing. In an interview with the LCI television channel on 19 January, the French Minister of the Armed Forces Sébastien Lecornu confirmed the participation of mercenaries in the fighting in Ukraine: "There are Frenchmen, civilians, who went to fight in Ukraine in Ukrainian military uniforms. We cannot forbid them; we are a democracy after all." The French leadership thus bears full responsibility for the deaths of its own countrymen.

But there is more. According to French media reports, the French Government has announced the creation of an "Artillery for Ukraine" coalition. The goal is to increase both short- and long-term support for the Kyiv regime. In a militaristic frenzy, France has announced the "inadmissibility" of a Russian victory and promises to send some 40 SCALP long-range missiles, "hundreds of aerial bombs", 72 Caesar self-propelled artillery systems and other weapons to Ukraine. We have also heard statements by Dutch officials about their readiness to deliver F-16 fighter jets to Ukraine. What makes this particularly cynical is that the Kyiv regime will be supplied with end-of-life machines, while the Dutch Air Force is buying new F-35s from the United States. A similar deal was reached between Greece and the United States. The unprincipled pragmatism of the Western sponsors of the Kyiv regime is clearly evident. And the further it goes, the more obvious it becomes that it is about money and blood.

Unfortunately, from the beginning the European Union has done everything to escalate the Ukrainian conflict. Whether in 2014 or in 2024. Whereas until recently the European Union considered it necessary to "help Ukraine for as long as it takes", it now calls for working to "ensure victory at all costs". And if the European Union itself is ready to throw a large part of its available resources at Ukraine, which will inevitably lead to a significant slowing of the process of European integration, this is the choice of those politicians who today find themselves steering European affairs. We should like to emphasize that waging a proxy war, steadily increasing the supply of arms and military equipment to the Zelenskyy regime, and illegally agreeing on a proposal to use the proceeds from frozen Russian assets are not consistent with statements about democracy and the importance of establishing peace in Ukraine. Obviously, we will not allow this to go without an adequate response.

But the fundamental point is a different one. In their unrestrained efforts to show their unwavering support for Ukraine and to keep pumping more and more lethal weapons into it, the partners in the "coalition of fighter jets, artillery and other hardware" are getting more and more deeply entangled in the Ukrainian conflict. In fact, they themselves are contributing to a manifold increase in the risks of a direct military confrontation between Russia and NATO. This is clearly not in the interests of the Ukrainian people nor in the interests of Europe.

Thank you for your attention.