

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.

FSC.DEL/332/23/Add.1  
22 September 2023

ENGLISH  
Original: RUSSIAN

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY  
MR. OLEG BUSHUEV, MEMBER OF THE DELEGATION OF THE  
RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS ON MILITARY  
SECURITY AND ARMS CONTROL, AT THE 1055th PLENARY MEETING OF  
THE OSCE FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION**

20 September 2023

**Agenda item: Security Dialogue  
Subject: Mine action**

Madam Chairperson,

We are grateful for the convening of this plenary meeting of the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) on mine action issues in the OSCE area, which correspond to the FSC's politico-military mandate. At the same time, we should like to express our puzzlement at the fact that the Canadian Chairmanship did not consider it necessary to consult with the Russian delegation regarding the choice of guest speakers, who have today presented biased, pro-Ukrainian assessments that are convenient only for the Kyiv regime and its foreign handlers. It is now clear why our Canadian colleagues did not inform the participating States until the last moment of the identity of the speakers covering the topic announced by the Chairmanship for discussion today. All this aggravates an already difficult situation in the FSC.

We trust that, by the FSC meeting of 4 October on international humanitarian law, the situation will have changed in terms of how speakers are invited and agreement is reached with us on their candidacies.

In that connection, we cannot but react to the clichés and other unsubstantiated attacks against the Russian Federation and our military personnel voiced today, written in strict accordance with the "Washington methodology". We categorically refute the groundless accusations on the part of the speakers and the delegations of the Western OSCE participating States that have taken the floor.

Madam Chairperson,

The Russian Federation has historically attached great importance to humanitarian demining. As a State facing the aggression of the post-Maidan regime in Kyiv supported by the collective West, we are doing everything possible at the present stage to ensure that the mine-contaminated territories of our country can return to a calm and safe life as soon as possible. Important social infrastructure facilities (hospitals, kindergartens, schools, power, water and gas supply facilities), agricultural land and areas for the construction of new facilities are subject to priority demining.

To co-ordinate the activities of agencies and organizations involved in demining the territories of the Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics and the Zaporozhye and Kherson regions, the International Mine Action Centre of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation has deployed three groups to organize the clearance of the territories of the new constituent entities of our country. In accordance with the demining plan, in 2022 and 2023, more than 43,000 hectares of the territories have been cleared of mines, and over 1.2 million explosive hazards have been discovered and destroyed.

Since 2 February 2022, National Guard troops of the Russian Federation in the zone of the special military operation have discovered and neutralized about 48.8 tonnes of explosive devices and over 260,000 explosive hazards, including over 9,770 anti-personnel and anti-tank mines, more than 136,000 artillery and mortar shells, 39,000 rounds for grenade launchers and about 21,500 grenades.

We attach the utmost importance to regular work to raise the awareness of the local population of the mine risk for children. Officers of the Russian armed forces engineering corps hold classes in schools in the Lugansk region on basic safety and on the procedure to be followed when explosive devices are detected.

Madam Chairperson,

One of the goals of our country's foreign and security policy is to create a world free of mines and other explosive ordnance. Russian military specialists are involved in humanitarian demining work around the globe and make a significant contribution to normalizing the lives and livelihoods of the citizens of States suffering from mine contamination. In that area, we pay special attention to the victims of NATO's barbaric aggression in Serbia and Syria. The results of this work at the national level are reflected annually in Russian reports under the Inhumane Weapons Convention and its additional Protocol II and in the responses by the Russian Federation to the OSCE Questionnaire on Anti-Personnel Mines and Explosive Remnants of War.

And what about our opponents?

During the course of the year, the Russian delegation has repeatedly drawn the attention of the FSC to the deliberate mining of civilian neighbourhoods by the Ukrainian armed forces using anti-tank and anti-personnel mines, including those made by the United States of America and some other NATO member countries, which hypocritically present themselves as leaders of international efforts in the field of humanitarian demining. More and more evidence is emerging confirming that they live according to the laws of George Orwell's *1984*, in which "war is peace".

This summer, the whole world was shocked by the announcement of the decision of the United States to supply the Kyiv regime with cluster munitions. Many States, including Western ones, spoke at that time of the unacceptability of their use in Ukraine. For example, on 8 July, Spanish Minister of Defence Margarita Robles noted that "certain weapons and bombs cannot be delivered under any circumstances", and Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni indicated that the Italian Republic hoped for universal application of the principles of the Convention on Cluster Munitions of 2008. On 10 July, British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak confirmed that the United Kingdom adhered to its obligations under the Convention, which included countering the use of cluster munitions. The list could continue.

The decision of the current US administration has been condemned in the United States as well. On 8 July, a group of members of the United States Congress issued a statement emphasizing that the White House's commitment to leadership in protecting human rights must include refusing to supply cluster munitions that carry serious risks for civilians. Their reaction is quite understandable: after all,

US presidential press secretary Jen Psaki said on 28 February 2022 that the use of cluster munitions “would potentially be a war crime”.

In the matter of double standards, the representatives of the Kyiv regime are not far behind their Western handlers. On 8 July, former Ukrainian Minister of Defence Oleksii Reznikov, who called the banned cluster munitions “liberation weapons”, stressed that the Kyiv regime “will continue to strictly comply with all the international humanitarian conventions signed and ratified by Ukraine”. We heard similar statements in this room on 19 July from the delegation of Ukraine, which announced that US cluster munitions would not be used on the territory of the Russian Federation, that Ukraine would refrain from using them “in inhabited urban areas in order to minimize the risks to the civilian population” and that it would keep careful records of their use and of the specific areas where they would be employed. Guarantees of “strict accounting” and “accountability”, by the way, were also given by the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine.

Now everyone in this room can really see what the Kyiv officials’ words are worth. It is in front of your eyes on the screens – blood, horror and death.

Since the beginning of August alone, Ukrainian forces have used US cluster munitions at least 104 times against densely populated areas of peaceful Donetsk. The enemy fired 155 mm calibre M-864 artillery shells with cluster warheads (M-42 shaped-charge and M-46 fragmentation cartridges). During this period, seven people were killed and 17 injured, including a child. Around 74 residential buildings were damaged. There have been reports of shelling with cluster munitions of the Bryansk region of the Russian Federation. How does this square with Ukraine’s assurances that they would not be used against civilians or against the territory of our country?

On 22 July, shells of this type solicitously supplied by the United States were fired in the Zaporozhye region at a private Russian vehicle carrying journalists from the Izvestia multimedia information centre, killing RIA Novosti war correspondent Rostislav Zhuravlev and injuring four of his fellow journalists to varying degrees of severity. We would be interested to know how the United States feels about the fact that the Ukrainian armed forces are using the weapons it has supplied to kill members of the press?

Then again, on 10 August the Pentagon already made it clear that, in the opinion of the United States, Ukraine is using cluster munitions “appropriately”. There are no limits to the US Government’s hypocrisy. While paying lip service to concern for the civilian population, the United States is lowering the threshold for the use of cluster munitions and encouraging widespread violations of international humanitarian law.

Moreover, the United States is indifferent to the fate of Ukraine, which will later spend decades disposing of unexploded submunitions. The failure rate of cluster munitions is known to be extremely high. For example, for US charges it is more than 14 per cent, rather than the 2.35 per cent claimed by the Pentagon. Nor do we rule out further transfers of this type of weaponry by US satellites. According to leaks, such “thought processes” are already being actively pursued in Estonia and Lithuania. In other words, cluster munitions have become a permanent fixture in the arsenals of the Ukrainian armed forces, and the frequency of their use, including against civilian targets, will increase.

Madam Chairperson,

We have no illusions that the relevant international structures will prefer, as before in similar cases, to turn a blind eye to the war crimes of the Ukrainian armed forces and their masters, which, in fact, makes them complicit in the lawless terrorism of the Kyiv regime. The lack of any adequate response confirms

their political bias. Once again, we remind the Western delegations present that your silence means that you have granted the terrorist regime in Kyiv a licence to kill Russian people. We will remember this.

The international community needs to respond immediately to violations of the principles of international humanitarian law and the provisions of Protocol V to the Inhumane Weapons Convention by the Kyiv regime with the connivance of Western States, and the perpetrators need to be brought to justice. Ignoring this problem is causing further deterioration of the international legal system in the field of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation.

For the time being, it is clear to the Russian delegation that in the current situation it is pointless to appeal to reason and demand that Ukraine and its “armourers” comply with international conventions on international humanitarian law and countering the threat posed by mines. For that reason, our army is concentrating its efforts on locating and disarming explosive devices and on identifying and destroying depots of the Ukrainian armed forces that contain mines and munitions.

The aim of demilitarization and denazification of Ukraine will be accomplished at any price. We are willing to pay the price.

Thank you for your attention.