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Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY
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RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS ON MILITARY
SECURITY AND ARMS CONTROL, AT THE 1045th PLENARY MEETING OF
THE OSCE FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION**

17 May 2023

**Agenda item: Security Dialogue
Subject: Capacity development in humanitarian mine action**

Madam Chairperson,

Once again, the Bulgarian Chairmanship has invited to today's meeting biased speakers representing the Department of State of the United States of America and the Ukrainian authorities, who voiced false and unsubstantiated narratives regarding the Russian Federation that are convenient for the Ukrainian Government and its foreign sponsors. Destructive steps of this kind by the Chairmanship are aimed at creating a confrontational and politicized atmosphere in the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) and at settling scores with "undesirable" participating States. The Chairmanship's provocative actions are not conducive to constructive work and merely exacerbate the already difficult situation at the FSC. Bulgaria continues to bear responsibility for this. The Russian delegation refutes the groundless accusations on the part of the invited speakers and the delegations of the Western OSCE participating States that have taken the floor.

Just as at the previous plenary meetings of the Forum on mine action, we note with regret the absence of a meaningful response to the irrefutable evidence we have presented regarding Ukraine's flagrant violations of the norms and principles of international humanitarian law. For the umpteenth time, we are hearing nothing but insinuations divorced from reality, with which the collective West is persistently trying to mislead the international community. We have to disappoint our colleagues: reading out copy-pasted statements, the sole purpose of which is to divert attention from the real culprits behind the current state of affairs in Ukraine, will not help to conceal the truth about the Kyiv regime's war crimes, which are being carried out with the support of its transatlantic handlers.

The Russian Federation once again draws attention to the fact that Ukrainian armed formations are deliberately mining the sides of roads between population centres, village footpaths, bridges, dams and areas around residential buildings where there are childcare, educational and medical facilities. Given that the Ukrainian armed forces are scattering mines far behind the front lines, these do not pose a threat to soldiers as such. It is being done solely for one purpose, namely to inflict physical and psychological harm on the civilians of regions that were not afraid to express their will and join the Russian Federation. This constitutes

a gross violation by the Ukrainian Government of the 1949 Geneva Conventions with regard to the rules on the conduct of hostilities.

We note Ukraine's failure to fulfil its obligations under the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (Ottawa Convention), to which it has been a party since 2006. According to United Nations data, the Ukrainian Government was meant to destroy around 6 million PFM-1 Lепestok landmines and 700,000 anti-personnel mines of other types as part of its obligations under the Ottawa Convention. However, reality shows that this destruction took place only on paper. Let us explain what it is at issue here.

First of all, when withdrawing from positions they had occupied, the Ukrainian armed forces mine areas of Donbas using anti-personnel mines, in particular PMN-2 pressure-operated blast mines, and then try to blame this on Russia. Furthermore, last year in Mariupol, Russian military personnel discovered depots containing MON-50 and MON-90 mines, which had been abandoned by the Ukrainian armed formations during their retreat.

Secondly, since July 2022, the Ukrainian armed forces have been using PFM-1 Lепestok pressure-operated anti-personnel mines against the civilian population of the Donetsk People's Republic. With the aid of these devices, Ukraine remotely mines densely populated residential areas of the Republic, where 114 civilian casualties, including ten children, caused by exploding Lепestok mines have already been recorded. Three of the victims died as a result of their injuries. Many suffered traumatic amputations of limbs or extremities.

In addition to the other considerable evidence of the Ukrainian Government's trampling upon its obligations under international humanitarian law, this type of shelling once again proves that the current Ukrainian authorities are waging a terrorist war against the civilian population.

It is symptomatic that all this is happening with the tacit consent of the United States, NATO countries and the European Union, which continue to give the green light for the Kyiv regime's countless war crimes and pump it full of weapons, the use and transfer of which are prohibited under the Inhumane Weapons Convention and the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention.

The record for hypocrisy has once again been broken by Germany, which is presenting itself as one of the key donors to international efforts in the field of humanitarian demining in Ukraine. On 2 May this year, German Federal Chancellor Olaf Scholz said: "It is very important for us that Ukraine can defend itself with the weapons that we supply, but that these are not used to attack Russian territory." Let us see how these assurances work in practice.

On 28 March this year, the Ukrainian armed forces remotely mined the Oktyabrsky Rudnik mining settlement in the Kuibyshevsky district of the city of Donetsk using MARS II multiple-launch rocket systems (M270 MLRS). MFOM AT2 cluster rockets were fired. These were filled with AT2 anti-tank mines, which are equipped with an anti-handling device. One of the mines triggered by a magnetic sensor exploded next to a car parked nearby and a pensioner was killed as a result; an elderly woman was seriously injured and suffered a traumatic amputation of both feet.

German-manufactured anti-tank mines were used by Ukrainian saboteurs during a bloody terrorist attack in two villages in the Klimovsky district of the Bryansk region on 2 March this year. I would remind you that, back then, radicals who had crept in from Ukrainian territory deployed small arms supplied to Ukraine by NATO States against a car carrying schoolchildren, killing a man and injuring an 11-year-old boy. Afterwards, near the village of Sushany, they laid German-produced DM31 anti-tank mines each

weighing 8 kg, which had been transferred to Ukraine earlier directly from Bundeswehr depots. Russian deminers have deactivated these devices.

Does the German delegation feel any genuine concern about the human casualties resulting from the Ukrainian armed forces' use of German-made munitions? What does the German Government make of the fact that mines produced in Germany were used in a terrorist attack on Russian territory organized by the Kyiv regime?

Speaking of Ukrainian terrorism. On 6 May this year, a terrorist recruited by the Ukrainian intelligence services planted two anti-tank mines along the route of the car belonging to Russian writer Yevgeny Nikolayevich Prilepin (Zakhar Prilepin) in the Nizhny Novgorod region of the Russian Federation. His comrade-in-arms Aleksandr Shubin was killed, while the publicist himself suffered serious injuries to his legs, but miraculously survived. The lack of condemnation for this terrorist attack involving mines, organized by the Kyiv regime against yet another Russian public figure, is self-revelatory as regards the so-called civilized community of States.

The representative of the US Department of State spoke a great deal today about the US Government's colossal investment in mine clearance efforts in Ukraine. However, he said nothing about the fact that Ukrainian nationalists have been remotely mining densely populated areas of the Lugansk People's Republic with the aid of US-manufactured mines, exposing non-combatants to considerable danger. In December 2022, the Ukrainian armed forces shelled the settlements of Svatovo, Lisichansk and Krasnorechenskoye in the Lugansk People's Republic, using M70/M73 remote anti-armour munition (RAMM) mines [delivered by 155 mm calibre howitzers], which resulted in at least 12 casualties. At the beginning of this year, the US Government sent more than 1,200 such projectiles to Kyiv. We should like to take this opportunity to satisfy our curiosity: what does the US Government make of the massive civilian casualties in Donbas resulting from the Ukrainian armed forces' employment of US-supplied weapons?

From all that has been said, there is a clear conclusion: the Ukrainian Government's Western arms donors, who are interested in generating bumper profits for the military-industrial complex of their countries, not only routinely ignore but also sponsor Ukraine's flagrant violations of the 1949 Geneva conventions with regard to the rules on the conduct of hostilities, Amended Protocol II to the Inhumane Weapons Convention, and the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. This is entirely in keeping with their policy of substituting existing international law with "rules" that are favourable to the United States and its allies and that are applied only to exert pressure on "undesirable" countries.

Under these circumstances, the Russian army is concentrating its efforts on locating and neutralizing mines that have already been laid, and on identifying and destroying depots containing such weapons. In total, since the start of the special operation, mine clearance detachments of the armed forces of the Russian Federation and the Russian Ministry of Emergency Situations have inspected over 35,594 hectares of land, 3,195 buildings, four bridges and more than 390 km of roads. In excess of 1 million explosive hazards have been detected and neutralized. The main explosive remnants of war deactivated by the engineering troops are PFM-1 Lepestok and MON-50 anti-personnel mines, TM-62 anti-tank mines with anti-handling devices, and German-made DM12 and DM31 mines.

In closing, we once again warn Ukraine and its patrons against misleading the world community and further speculation. The international community needs to respond immediately to the violations of the principles of international humanitarian law and of the provisions of Amended Protocol II to the Inhumane Weapons Convention and the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention committed by the Kyiv regime with the connivance of Western States, and the perpetrators need to be brought to justice. Ignoring this problem also

leads to further deterioration of the international legal system in the field of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation.

We call upon the OSCE, the United Nations, the International Committee of the Red Cross and other relevant international agencies to bring their influence to bear on the Ukrainian Government and take effective measures to prevent the grave humanitarian consequences that the Ukrainian armed formations' war crimes are having for the civilian population.

Thank you for your attention.