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**STATEMENT BY  
MR. ALEKSANDR VOLGAREV, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF  
THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1456th MEETING OF THE  
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

14 December 2023

**In response to the reports by the Chairpersons of the three Committees of the  
Permanent Council**

Mr. Chairperson,

We have listened carefully to the presentations by the Chairpersons of the three Committees. We once again have to point out that the work of these subsidiary bodies of the Permanent Council is in many respects not aligned with the OSCE's tasks as a multidisciplinary organization. Let us look at each of the areas in more detail.

We take note of the report by the Permanent Representative of Romania on the activities of the Security Committee.

We are obliged to observe that the Committee's formerly constructive work on a whole set of issues constituting a direct threat to the security of the OSCE's entire area of responsibility has been completely politicized, and the focus of substantive discussions altogether blurred to accommodate the politically motivated approaches of certain countries. Global security challenges – above all, international terrorism and drug trafficking in the context of a crisis of inter-State trust and practical co-operation at the international level – have unfortunately not been reflected in the Committee's work. At the same time, the Chairmanship has made attempts to introduce into the activities of this subsidiary body issues that lie beyond the Committee's mandate, in particular the combating of disinformation. We also note a clear geographical imbalance in the selection of keynote speakers for the Committee's meetings: on each and every issue it is principally representatives of Ukraine and the "Anglo-Saxon" countries who have delivered statements.

We should also like to separately emphasize that the OSCE Chairmanship of North Macedonia bears full responsibility for the arbitrary decision to deliberately hollow out the Organization's programme of work on countering transnational threats, and in particular for the suspension of the traditional conferences held under the auspices of the OSCE on counter-terrorism, combating drugs, border security and police co-operation. We have always called for and will continue to call for substantive and professional dialogue on these highly relevant topics.

We have listened carefully to the report by the Chairperson of the Economic and Environmental Committee, the Permanent Representative of Austria, on the activities of that subsidiary body of the Permanent Council.

The continuation by the OSCE Chairmanship team of North Macedonia of their Polish predecessors' flawed course aimed at politicizing and "Ukrainianizing" the activities of the entire Organization has all but destroyed the once constructive work carried out under the second "basket". North Macedonia's refusal to engage in substantive dialogue and take into account the interests of all participating States culminated in the failure to agree on the theme and agenda of the annual Economic and Environmental Forum for the first time in the Forum's thirty-year history.

As a result, the only consensus-based OSCE event this year, not counting the Ministerial Council meeting in Skopje, turned out to be the Economic and Environmental Dimension Implementation Meeting (EEDIM) dealing with environmental protection and security. But the EEDIM, too, was exploited by a number of participants to trot out anti-Russian propaganda and raise false and baseless accusations against Russia – quite often accusations of an absurd nature.

The climate of hostility at the OSCE being fostered to suit a certain group of States has had a negative impact on the work of the Economic and Environmental Committee as well. The meeting topics agreed on at the start of the year were presented exclusively in the context of the situation in Ukraine and, what is more, with that context as supplied by the Kyiv regime's representatives themselves. Grotesque accusations continued to be levelled against Russia claiming that it had provoked global energy and food crises and inflicted damage on the environment and biodiversity.

However, a veil was deliberately drawn over the destructive consequences that the countless illegitimate anti-Russian unilateral restrictive measures imposed by Western countries themselves have had for the global economy and trade and transport connectivity. The accusations that Russia has stopped supplying fossil fuels to Europe smack of cynicism given European countries' conscious and politically motivated rejection of Russian energy resources and their accelerated transition towards a "green" economy to the detriment of their own industrial development, and also in view of the unprecedented terrorist act targeting such major international energy infrastructure facilities as the Nord Stream pipelines in the Baltic Sea – an act that to this day has yet to be investigated.

We call upon the incoming Maltese OSCE Chairmanship to undertake vigorous efforts to ensure that normal functioning is resumed in the economic and environmental dimension on the basis of equal dialogue and with account taken of the interests of all participating States without exception, so as to look jointly for ways of developing further economic co-operation in the OSCE area.

We also have something to say about the report by the Chairperson of the Human Dimension Committee, the Permanent Representative of Ireland. At the instigation of its Chairmanship, the Committee's meetings this year quite often turned into opportunities for loquacious Ukrainian officials to have their fifteen minutes of fame and for hyping up anti-Russian attitudes from various thematic angles. We should like to remind you that these are meant to be meetings of a subsidiary body of the OSCE Permanent Council and not gatherings of Russophobes like those taking place in, say, Brussels or Strasbourg. Religious intolerance and Nazism are running rampant in the Organization's area of responsibility, the rights of national minorities and ethnic groups there are being grossly violated, and refugees and migrants are suffering harassment – not least in the countries "west of Vienna". We believe that a selective approach to work in the human dimension is a non-starter and quite simply means sounding the death knell for the third "basket".

In that regard, we urge the incoming Chairmanship of the Committee, along with the incoming Maltese OSCE Chairmanship, to return to a faithful performance of duties in 2024. It is necessary to begin reaching agreement on the Committee's work plan in advance (including within the framework of informal consultations) and, furthermore, to avoid thematic overlaps between its meetings and events convened by the OSCE Chairmanship, and to stick to approaches endorsed by all the OSCE participating States.

In closing, let me say a few words about the activities of all three Committees. Generally speaking, it must be acknowledged that this is now the second year in a row that these bodies have been subjected to excessive politicization on the basis of the anti-Russian attitudes of a number of countries. The imposition of this kind of thematic "monopoly" diminishes the effectiveness of the overall work and does not allow all the participating States to meaningfully discuss and address a wide range of security issues in the three dimensions of the OSCE.

We would remind you that the OSCE Chairmanship has a clear duty to co-ordinate the Committees' work and ensure that that work is focused on current challenges in the OSCE area. We urge our Maltese colleagues, who are embarking on their "tour of duty" as the Chairmanship team next year, and the Chairpersons of the three Committees to give serious thought as to how to develop a balanced and unifying programme of work, taking into account the needs of all participating States without exception, as opposed to the needs of just some of them.

Thank you for your attention.