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FSC.DEL/194/23
18 May 2023

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

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

Madam Chairperson,

The “grand tour” of European capitals undertaken by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in quest of arms has demonstrated the readiness of the West to invest heavily in an escalation of the politico-military situation on the continent, which is already highly explosive as it is. The Chair of the NATO Military Committee, Rob Bauer, recently acknowledged openly that NATO was working on military plans against Russia. The situation in the zone of the special military operation clearly shows that an element of these plans is the fostering of Ukrainian terror against the civilian population of the Russian Federation. However, the attempts to intimidate our people in our historical territories and break their will to resist the “Kyiv-NATO conglomerate” are in vain. The authorities in Kyiv most certainly understand that they have lost those regions forever.

The continued reckless plying of a fascistoid regime with ever more lethal and longer-range weapons is the only way for the collective West to absolve itself of responsibility for the crisis that it provoked itself and into which it has plunged many countries and regions through its foolish policy of setting neighbours against one another. At present a self-proclaimed “civilized” minority led by the United States of America – a minority that accounts for just 15 per cent of the global population – is trying to impose its will on other States and peoples, provoking them into confrontation with Russia and China for the sake of preserving its position of single-handed hegemony.

It is for that very reason that NATO weapons continue to be fired at the civilian population of Donbas. During the presidency of Joe Biden the US Government has spent some 36 billion dollars on pursuing these goals. Scuppering its historical mission to avert armed conflict in Europe, the European Union has approved the allocation of 1 billion euros to procure artillery shells and missiles for the Ukrainian armed forces, which means that the overall volume of military aid provided to the Ukrainian Government at the supranational level now stands at 5.6 billion euros. The militaristic policies of the German Government have reached an unprecedented scale: it has decided to supply 20 Marder armoured infantry fighting vehicles, 30 Leopard 1 tanks, four IRIS-T-SLM anti-aircraft systems, 200 reconnaissance unmanned aerial

vehicles and hundreds of military vehicles. As we now know, the Slovenian Government has sent 20 Valuk armoured personnel carriers, while SAMP/T anti-aircraft systems manufactured jointly by France and Italy have been transferred to Ukraine. Colleagues, you surely understand that the Western war machine is operating to prolong an armed conflict that very much risks spilling over into a direct clash between NATO and Russia.

However, it is the United Kingdom that has allowed itself to be carried away the most by geopolitical “games”: it is pulling out all the stops to assert its status as the Alliance’s informal leader in matters Ukrainian. As far as British society is concerned, the colonial era is a source of national pride; to this day there still prevails there the ideology of the “white man’s burden”, with the colonizer assumed to be a torchbearer of “progress” for the entire world. Instead of progress, though, it is destruction and civilian casualties that the UK Government is bringing to eastern Europe. By transferring Storm Shadow long-range precision missile systems to Ukraine, the British authorities have caused a manifold increase in the level of military tensions in the region.

On 12 May this year, the day on which the People’s Republics of Donetsk and Lugansk celebrated their independence from Ukraine, nationalist armed formations engaged in demonstrative shelling of the two republics. NATO artillery of 155 mm calibre was used to pound the city of Donetsk, killing two civilians and injuring ten people. In the city of Lugansk, British-made Storm Shadow air-launched missiles fired by warplanes from the Ukrainian air force hit a plant of the enterprise Poly-Pack, which manufactures polymer products, and the Milam meat processing plant. US-made ADM-160B MALD decoy missiles, designed to confuse air defence systems into treating them as targets, were used in the preparation of that missile strike. Destruction of residential buildings was recorded; there were civilian casualties, including six children, two of whom were taken to the Lugansk Republican Clinical Hospital.

On 13 May this year, the Ukrainian armed forces carried out an attack on the settlement of Yuvileine near Lugansk using Storm Shadow missiles. Tellingly, just a few minutes before these strikes on a playground, a US-made unmanned aerial vehicle fell to the ground in a courtyard in Lugansk; it appears to have been used to determine the co-ordinates for the strike. As a result of the missile strike, a woman was injured and the glazing on seven apartment buildings and 25 garages was damaged, as were the windows of 15 civilian cars. These British-made long-range weapons continued to pound the peaceful city on 14 and 15 May.

Apart from yet another moral stain on the United Kingdom’s reputation, this state of affairs attests to the UK Government’s flagrant flouting of the provisions of the Arms Trade Treaty, whereby a State exporting arms is obliged to assess, “in an objective and non-discriminatory manner”, whether the arms are likely to be used to commit violations of international humanitarian law and acts of violence against women and children (Article 7). The Treaty also makes it quite clear that the United Kingdom as a State Party thereto should not have transferred the aforementioned systems if it knew that they would be used to commit breaches of the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and attacks against civilian objects and civilians (Article 6). However, the UK Government simply rode roughshod over its international export control obligations, hastening to test the limits of what is permissible in this conflict. It is for this very reason that the UK authorities share responsibility with their counterparts in Kyiv for the human casualties in Donbas and will sooner or later have to answer for their actions.

We wish to emphasize separately that the original carrier vehicles for Storm Shadow missiles are Western combat aircraft. That is why Ukraine, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands are so actively promoting the idea of delivering fighter jets to Ukraine urgently. This would allow the Ukrainian war criminals to launch such missiles, each with a total weight of 1,300 kg, at the Russian areas that they want to “reconquer”, with no regard for the lives lost in the process. The Ukrainian-Western “coterie” should be in

no doubt as to the inevitability of Russia taking retaliatory measures if the Ukrainian armed forces continue to be equipped further with long-range weapons and aircraft.

The continued “beefing up” of the Kyiv regime with Western armaments has engendered large-scale military corruption and arms smuggling in Ukraine and beyond its borders. According to the Acting Deputy Inspector General of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Nicole Angarella, 178 reports of corruption on the part of the Ukrainian Government have been received by USAID over 11 months, which represents a 556 per cent increase from the previous 11-month period. There is no need to look far for examples. For example, the US mercenary John McIntyre, who served in Ukraine’s “Foreign Legion”, has stated that, before his very eyes, the battalion commander and the sergeant in charge of logistics surreptitiously sold 20 Javelin anti-tank missile systems, some 50 M4 rifles and a score of M240 machine guns. The famous investigative journalist Seymour Hersh, a Pulitzer Prize winner, has disclosed information that, even at an early stage of the conflict, Poland and Romania were being flooded with weapons from Ukraine. However, concerns that the Ukrainian Government might resell Western man-portable air defence systems (MANPADS) capable of downing aircraft at considerable altitudes did not begin to be voiced in the West until several months after the start of the special operation. Incidentally, this did not prevent the Latvian Ministry of Defence from recklessly handing over to Ukraine all the Stinger MANPADS that it had available in its national arsenal.

All of this testifies to the unscrupulousness of the NATO and European Union member countries, which have cast aside the basic principles of rigorous export control in arms transfers and responsible behaviour when considering such transfers to conflict zones – principles that they themselves have been promoting for many years. Moreover, they are disregarding a series of international agreements aimed at minimizing risk in this field, including the Common Position of the Council of the European Union, the Arms Trade Treaty, the CSCE Principles Governing Conventional Arms Transfers and other fundamental international obligations.

Given the high risk of Western weapons and military equipment ending up in illicit circulation and, *inter alia*, falling into the hands of extremist and terrorist elements – which could pose a threat to international peace and European security – we call upon the US and EU delegations to give a detailed briefing at the Forum for Security Co-operation on what measures are being taken to prevent the illicit diversion of Western arms and ammunition from Ukraine to other parts of the world. We believe that the reports about how these have been discovered in the possession of fighters in the Lake Chad region ought to be sufficient to prompt the implementation of specific actions.

Madam Chairperson,

Russia continues to systematically neutralize the threats arising from modern Western-manufactured weapons being transferred to or used by the Ukrainian armed forces.

As part of the demilitarization of Ukraine, the armed forces of the Russian Federation are using long-range high-precision weapons to carry out concentrated strikes on bases of the Ukrainian armed forces, but also on storage sites for ammunition, weapons and military equipment transferred by NATO and EU States. For example, military facilities in Ternopil and Petropavlivka were destroyed in that way. Over the past 72 hours, air defence systems have intercepted at least nine British-made Storm Shadow missiles, 17 HARM anti-radar missiles and 27 missiles fired from HIMARS multiple-launch rocket systems. A Patriot anti-aircraft battery – the pride of the US military-industrial complex – was destroyed through a high-precision strike using the Kinzhal hypersonic missile system. Western military experts are signalling serious concerns about the rate at which NATO military equipment is being destroyed in Ukraine.

The systematic elimination of Western military aid supplies, the active combat operations of Russian troops and the general demoralization of the Ukrainian armed forces are compelling the Kyiv junta to venture into dangerous provocations. Over the past few days alone, the Ukrainian armed forces have fired incendiary phosphorous shells at border settlements in the Belgorod region of the Russian Federation, while Ukrainian nationalists fleeing from Artemivsk set fire to a multi-storey building with civilians inside, mowing down those who tried to escape from the building. The true attitude of the Ukrainian junta and its handlers towards civilians and international humanitarian law must be duly assessed by the world community, including the OSCE and the United Nations.

We are closely monitoring Ukrainian media reports about heightened levels of background radiation in Khmelnytskyi after the destruction of an ammunition depot of the Ukrainian armed forces. Just a few days ago, it was being claimed in Ukraine and in Western capitals that depleted uranium munitions did not present a risk and fell under the category of “conventional” ammunition. Now, though, the inhabitants of the Khmelnytskyi region are being warned about the possibility of their children having to be evacuated and about the risks of contamination of drinking water. There is also talk of how the prevailing winds in that area are such that the “British military aid” in the form of depleted uranium rounds could well be carried back to London as microparticles. We will continue to look out for Ukrainian-Western double standards being applied in practice.

Madam Chairperson,

The Western OSCE participating States like to hold forth on the terms and conditions for resolving the situation in Ukraine. However, they need not look far for formulas. A few days ago, German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock confirmed – by no means for the first time – that NATO and EU States were directly involved on the Ukrainian Government’s side in the armed confrontation against the Russian Federation. Now it is sufficient to remind them of the recent remarks by EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs Josep Borrell to the effect that, in order to end the conflict, it is necessary to stop the flows of military aid to Ukraine.

We warn the United States and its satellites about the counterproductive nature of their current aggressive course with regard to the Russian Federation. We call upon them to realize the gravity of the moment and to take steps to exercise military restraint, withdraw Western military personnel and weapons from the territory of Ukraine, and desist from any hostile activities against our country. Those responsible for war crimes against the Russian people will face inevitable punishment, while the sponsors of the Kyiv regime, a regime that is directed against the people, must be ready to rebuild, at their own expense, the civilian infrastructure in Donbas destroyed by the Ukrainian armed forces since 2014.

Thank you for your attention.