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**STATEMENT BY
MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1505th (SPECIAL) MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

23 January 2025

**On the presentation of the 2025 Finnish OSCE Chairmanship's priorities by the
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland, Ms. Elina Valtonen**

Mr. Chairperson,
Minister,
Distinguished heads of the executive structures and important institutions of our Organization,

We have carefully studied the Finnish priorities and the first steps taken by the new Chairmanship. Our impressions so far are extremely contradictory. On the one hand, we note Finland's desire to keep up the Organization's work and preserve the channels for dialogue; on the other hand, there is a clear intention to push through non-consensus, highly confrontational topics for the agenda and to make the OSCE subordinate to the policies of exclusively one group of participating States. It is particularly strange to hear anti-Russian arguments at the OSCE from the representatives of Finland – a country that stood at the cradle of our Organization and has traditionally encouraged dialogue between East and West.

The OSCE now finds itself on the brink of survival: within the Organization there is almost nothing left of what its name stands for – neither security nor co-operation. For years the eradication of these concepts from the OSCE has been pursued by those who lay claim to some kind of exclusivity in world politics, and instead of the outlines agreed upon by all the participating States for building indivisible security in the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian area, they have been promoting bloc-based approaches under the guise of the notorious "rules-based order".

We warn our Finnish colleagues not to repeat the mistakes of previous Chairmanships, which covered up for the Kyiv regime and demonstratively turned a blind eye to its crimes. To ignore the obvious, to deliberately hush up the truth, is a cul-de-sac, or rather a path leading to further destruction of the OSCE. To make out that freedom and democracy are flourishing in Ukraine today and that civilian casualties from the use of weapons supplied there by NATO countries simply do not exist is an act of self-deception and deception of the international community.

The work on Ukraine should be aimed at eliminating the root causes of the conflict, be balanced and transparent, and help to reduce confrontation rather than increase it. It is in this way that the OSCE could

demonstrate its “added value”. We note, Minister, that your statements and actions in Kyiv on 8 January did nothing to facilitate this.

With regard to Ukraine, we have always been ready to engage in a political and diplomatic process that is based not on some unrealistic “formulas” in the form of Western ultimatums to our country but on eliminating the causes of the tragic situation resulting from the February 2014 coup d’état in Kyiv. Today, such a dialogue should, without question, be aimed at ensuring that NATO countries no longer use Ukraine and Ukrainians as a tool in their struggle against Russia. Any settlement should be sustainable and rule out the possibility of the conflict being reignited with renewed vigour. So far, Russia’s stance has not been met with reciprocal constructive readiness on the part of its opponents. The Russian special operation will be continued, in full compliance with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, until the existing threats have been completely eliminated.

The Finnish Chairmanship declared today that it would fight to uphold the principles and commitments adopted within the OSCE. Consequently, the egregious violations of these principles and commitments by the so-called authorities in Kyiv and their sponsors should not go unnoticed.

For example, the principle of the indivisibility of security, whose roots go back to the Helsinki Final Act of 1975 and which was subsequently reaffirmed in the Charter for European Security of 1999, the Astana declaration of 2010 and other OSCE documents. Quite incompatible with a host of thematic decisions adopted at the OSCE Ministerial Council over the years are the actions of the Kyiv regime since 2014 aimed at attacking the civilian population, critical and transport infrastructure, mines, chemical storage sites, the Zaporizhzhia and Kursk nuclear power plants, oil refineries and fuel depots; its laying of mines in the Black Sea; its attempts to organize, *inter alia*, energy, water and food blockades of Crimea and Donbass; and its actions to establish a hotbed of international terrorism, extremism and neo-Nazism in Ukraine.

It is important to ensure that the relevant OSCE structures do not ignore the huge range of problems related to the violation by the Kyiv regime of the rights of the Russian and Russian-speaking population and of religious freedoms, or the large-scale crackdown on human rights in Ukraine as a whole. The gross infringement of these rights goes against the fundamental principles of the Helsinki Final Act, the relevant provisions of the CSCE Vienna Concluding Document of 1989 and the CSCE Copenhagen Document of 1990, the Istanbul Summit Declaration of 1999, and the Hague and Lund Recommendations of the High Commissioner on National Minorities of 1996 and 1999.

The policy pursued in territories controlled by the Kyiv regime and consisting in the glorification of Nazism and Nazi accomplices, in the use of torture and other inhuman or degrading treatment, and in the killing of journalists and public figures must finally receive a proper assessment as being incompatible with OSCE commitments.

We reiterate that, faced with the West’s systematic lies and double standards, Russia intends to actively defend itself against the multidimensional hybrid aggression being carried on by several NATO member countries, spearheaded by the United States of America and the United Kingdom, against the very foundations of the Russian Federation’s statehood and sovereignty, our country’s security interests and the prospects for the successful development of our society and State.

Madam Chairperson-in-Office,

Our assumption is that the Finnish Chairmanship will focus on other important regional issues as well. The rise in tensions in the Balkans is cause for concern, especially in the context of the continuing

provocations by the Kosovo authorities. The challenging situation as regards the Transdniestrian settlement process requires an immediate response from the Chairmanship, the OSCE Mission to Moldova and the Organization as a whole. The population of Transdniestria is going through a most trying ordeal because of the artificially created and worsening energy crisis, and tens upon tens of thousands of ordinary people are suffering. It is still possible to avert a humanitarian disaster, but time has almost run out.

We look forward to a continuation of regular meetings within the framework of the discussions on security and stability in the Trans-Caucasus, which do not necessarily have to take place in Geneva. The situation in the South Caucasus in general means that the Chairmanship cannot allow itself to let down its guard there.

We note Finland's interest in the OSCE's work in Central Asia, including through the OSCE field operations in that region. It is important to avoid politicization and bias in this work. It is unacceptable to apply the Organization's toolbox to the Central Asian region so as to advance the interests of certain groups of countries or alliances. The work of the field operations in the region should be organized strictly in accordance with their mandates, also taking into account the needs of the host States.

Russia is cognizant of the challenges that OSCE field operations are generally encountering given the lack of a Unified Budget. We repeat that this problem must and absolutely can be resolved without detriment to the very essence of the OSCE's fieldwork, specifically by adopting the Organization's principal financial document, rather than by means of various sorts of extrabudgetary funds that undermine the transparency and accountability of its field operations. To put it bluntly, in such a destructive scenario the "added value" brought by the field operations cannot but be called into question.

Madam Chairperson-in-Office,

The three dimensions of the OSCE require full attention with regard to the pressing needs and interests of all 57 participating States.

We are convinced of the necessity of restoring the OSCE's traditionally high profile – now sadly considerably diminished – in countering a range of transnational threats. One of the key areas of work in that regard must be combating the international terrorist threat in all its manifestations. We call upon the Chairmanship to attend with all due seriousness to the fight against drug trafficking. We are prepared to continue seeking common ground on the security of information and communication technologies.

We believe it is important this year to hold the traditional high-level conferences on counter-terrorism, anti-drug efforts and cybersecurity, along with the expert meetings on border security and police co-operation. We note the need to organize the Annual Security Review Conference in line with the format approved through an OSCE Ministerial Council decision adopted in Porto in 2002 and to initiate the relevant consultations in good time.

We see no additional value in discussing climate change under the OSCE economic and environmental dimension. The topic is a highly confrontational one. And everyone is well aware of the grave negative economic consequences of the hasty abandonment of nuclear power and fossil fuels in a number of European countries. It seems to us more important today to discuss the unfreezing of production, trade, transport and logistics linkages between our countries and to reflect on the prospects for further economic coexistence in the OSCE area. To at least try to restore the once constructive, creative nature of work under the second "basket", which has been almost completely destroyed as a result of the politicization of the agenda and its fixation on one country-specific subject.

We urge Finland to pay attention, with all due responsibility and seriousness, to the content of the OSCE's human dimension for 2025, including the package of human dimension events. It is vital to take into account the views of all participating States without exception and not to dilute the essence of the third "basket" to suit the interests of individual countries.

In view of a significant red-letter day that is coming up, namely the 80th anniversary of the end of the Second World War, special emphasis should be placed in the agenda on such issues as combating the glorification of Nazism and neo-Nazism and countering the falsification of history. Another topic to focus on is discrimination against the Russian and Russian-speaking population in Ukraine, the Baltic States and Moldova. It is time, finally, to stop drawing a veil over the outrageous human rights violations in these countries and pretending that they "do not exist". It is unacceptable to ignore the issues of the educational and linguistic rights of national minorities, the preservation of cultural and historical heritage, and the reduction of statelessness. The same applies to combating trafficking in human beings, including trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation and trafficking for the removal of human organs, tissues and cells.

Countering religious intolerance and protecting freedom of religion should be among the priorities. The issues of freedom of movement, children's rights, the situation of migrants and refugees, and discrimination in sport remain relevant.

Given the application of double standards and the use of the electoral methodology of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights for opportunistic ends, there continues to be an urgent need to develop uniform rules for election observation in the OSCE's area of responsibility.

Madam Chairperson-in-Office,

Finland's practical actions will determine the viability of our Organization in the face of a deepening crisis of trust and growing mutual alienation. We are convinced that the future of our multilateral structure depends directly on whether it can be deployed to restore mutually respectful professional dialogue for unifying purposes.

We call upon the Finnish Chairmanship to act prudently and wisely in organizing our joint work, to comply strictly with the Rules of Procedure, and to conserve the consensus principle in decision-making so as to ensure that the interests of all participating States without exception are taken into account. We trust that Finland will adhere strictly to the mandate of the Chairmanship-in-Office (a decision adopted at the OSCE Ministerial Council meeting in Porto in 2002) and to the rules on public statements (Permanent Council Decision No. 485 of 2002). Only such a balanced approach can bring the Organization back from the political sidelines. We still hope that you are up to the task.

Thank you for your attention.