

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.

PC.DEL/59/24
1 February 2024

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY
MR. ALEKSANDR VOLGAREV, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF
THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1459th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

1 February 2024

On the ongoing crimes by the Kyiv regime and the dangerous policies of the Western alliance countries to exacerbate tensions

Madam Chairperson,

In their hybrid aggression against Russian statehood, the NATO countries have no qualms about squeezing the last drop of lifeblood out of Ukraine. After the overwhelming failure of the attempts at offensive operations deep into the territory of the Russian Federation in Donbas and the Dnieper Lowland, the Kyiv regime's handlers have stopped concealing, even in public statements, their desire to drag the fighting out for as long as possible and to try to derive geopolitical and economic benefits from the current situation. They are not interested in the tragic fate of ordinary people – Russians and Ukrainians. This is evident even from the way in which our opponents put on their propagandistic political spectacle on the various international platforms, including the OSCE.

The subordinate role of the Ukrainians in the “pyramid of American needs” has recently been recognized again by the Kyiv regime's Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba. In an interview with the Bloomberg news agency on the margins of the World Economic Forum in Davos, he declared bluntly that the United States of America was saving the most important thing in the current conflict – the lives of its soldiers – while the Kyiv regime was offering “the best deal on the global market of security”, expecting weapons and money from the West “to finish the job”. Also in Davos British Foreign Secretary David Cameron clarified whose job exactly, noting that the United States had spent 10 per cent of its defence budget and this had enabled it to destroy almost half of Russia's weapons “without the loss of a single American life”. Despite all these revelations, the representatives of the “Anglo-Saxons” in this room falsely claim that they are not waging a proxy war against Russia courtesy of the Ukrainians.

We are not going to dwell in detail on these inadequate assessments of Russia's military potential. We will simply point out the most important thing: as part of the special military operation, the Russian armed forces are methodically reducing the military capability of the Kyiv regime's formations, which is being used for attacks on the civilian population of our country's territory. According to the Russian Ministry of Defence, in 2023 the Ukrainian armed forces lost over 215,000 troops killed or wounded, and more than 28,000 weapons and pieces of equipment were destroyed or put out of commission. The offensive capabilities of the Kyiv regime are effectively exhausted.

In January of this year, the Russian armed forces carried out a series of combined strikes, hitting storage sites for fuel, weapons and ammunition, disabling production workshops from the military industry, a number of military transport infrastructure facilities and combat aircraft. Several settlements in the Donetsk People's Republic and the Kharkiv region were liberated. High-precision strikes destroyed temporary deployment points for foreign mercenaries. As a result of one of these strikes, more than 60 fighters, most of them French nationals, were liquidated in Kharkiv on 16 January, and more than 20 were injured.

Kyiv plans to make up for its monstrous losses through total forced mobilization (the relevant draft law was submitted to the Verkhovna Rada (Ukrainian Parliament) by the Kyiv regime's Ministry of Defence on 30 January this year), also by recruiting cannon fodder from among the Ukrainians who headed to European Union countries so as not to have to fight to keep Volodymyr Zelenskyy's regime in power. In Kyiv they make no secret of the fact that they are trying to mobilize a further 500,000 people, but for now there is nowhere to take these people from.

Under the threat of criminal prosecution, ordinary people are fleeing from the territories controlled by the Zelenskyy regime. The Ukrainian border authorities claim to have detained in 2023 some 11,000 people liable for military service as they attempted to cross the border in all directions (8,000 were making their way through the forests, 3,000 were trying to cross the border with forged documents). It is obvious that the real number of fugitives in the Ukrainian border area is much higher.

The bragging of the military and political leadership in Kyiv, which promised some kind of "breakthrough to Crimea" last summer, is history. So as not to lose what is left of Western support, the Kyiv regime can only continue to lie today about its "successes". For example, in early January, Zelenskyy publicly fantasized about how the Ukrainian armed forces had been able to down dozens of combat aircraft ("12 planes and 26 helicopters in 24 hours") with the help of a Western "Wunderwaffe" (miracle weapon). By the way, this nonsense was hastily denied even by the Ukrainian air force command.

We note that the greater the number of defeats and failures of the Kyiv regime's formations on the battlefield, the more aggressive and bellicose the rhetoric of their sponsors becomes. Their emotions are understandable: the anti-Russian adventure and attempts to use the situation in Ukraine to ramp things up and destabilize the socio-political situation in Russia did not go well from the very beginning. The West clearly did not expect a high degree of unity in Russian society when it came to carrying out the tasks set by Russian President Vladimir Putin to protect the civilian population from the crimes of the Kyiv regime.

The legitimacy and validity of the decision to conduct a special military operation in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations is confirmed first and foremost by the fact that Zelenskyy's formations have not stopped their targeted attacks on the civilian population. Owing to their impotence on the battlefield, the Ukrainian armed forces are targeting peaceful squares in towns and cities where there have never been any military objects.

Here are just a few examples. On 30 December 2023, Belgorod city centre was shelled – 25 people were killed, including five children; more than 111 people were injured, including 17 minors. On New Year's Eve, the centre of Donetsk was hit – four people were killed and at least 14 injured. Three weeks later, on 21 January, the Donetsk neighbourhood of Tekstilshchik was attacked – 28 people were killed at the market there and a further 25 injured. On 29 January, the Kalininsky district of Donetsk was shelled – at least three people were killed. Gorlovka in the Donetsk region was subjected to brutal attacks in January (an ambulance was hit there in a targeted strike on 12 January – a patient and a paramedic died). Many other Russian settlements have also been affected.

The aforementioned crimes were committed using artillery and multiple-launch rocket systems supplied to the Kyiv regime by NATO countries. Realizing their complicity in the killing of Russians and Ukrainians, the sponsors of the Ukrainian neo-Nazis are endeavouring to hush up the details of these tragedies. As a matter of fact, Pentagon chief Lloyd Austin noted in a recent public comment that the United States “had no credible evidence of the misuse” by Ukraine of the US weapons supplied. It looks as if the US Government is actually seeking to condone the killing of Russian civilians.

However, it is absolutely baffling that the OSCE leadership has made it its policy to completely ignore these civilian casualties as if they did not actually exist. It is no longer possible to put this all down to an accident or ignorance. This is a shameful silence that casts a shadow over the standing of the entire OSCE and is essentially a policy of covering up the crimes of the Kyiv regime and identifying with them.

And this approach is not new. I would remind you that in 2023 not one of the headline-making crimes committed by the Ukrainian armed forces received any reaction at all from the OSCE leadership and the Organization’s relevant institutions. For example, the shelling of a hospital in Novoaidar on 28 January (14 dead and 24 injured); the targeting of a minibus in Donetsk on 28 April (seven dead, including one child); the rocket attack on a social centre in Chaplinka on 3 November (nine people were killed and a further nine injured); the strike on an employment centre in Donetsk on 7 November (seven dead and 61 injured), plus numerous attacks on civilians with the aid of unmanned aerial vehicles and other appalling crimes. The same approaches could also be observed in 2022 and in the preceding eight years of conflict in Donbas.

There was also no clear reaction to the incident of 24 January this year, when the Kyiv regime’s fighters, using a US-made Patriot missile system, shot down over the Belgorod region an Il-76 Russian military transport aircraft carrying 74 people (six crew members, three accompanying Russian officers and 65 Ukrainian armed forces military personnel for an exchange that had been agreed upon in advance with the Ukrainian side). The heroic actions of the Russian crew made it possible to steer the aircraft away from the village of Yablonoovo when it crashed. None of the village’s residents were injured. All those on board were killed. This included the Ukrainian fighters, whom the Russian military had kept alive, but were then finished off by their “own people”. This brings us to the hypocritical calls today on Russia by the representative of the European Union to ensure the humane treatment of Ukrainian prisoners of war.

It is important to note that the aircraft’s route was known to Kyiv in advance, and the Kyiv regime’s military intelligence has publicly confirmed that the exchange was meant to take place there on the day of the incident. This is not the first time that the Zelenskyy regime has wilfully disposed of its own military personnel who have been taken prisoner. Suffice it to recall the shelling using multiple-launch rocket systems on 29 July 2022 of the detention facility in Elenovka (Donetsk People’s Republic), where captured members of the Azov battalion were being held. At least 50 people were killed on that occasion.

The Kyiv regime’s sponsors are now facing the fact that the political elites and the public in their countries are increasingly critical of the investments being made to fuel the Ukrainian conflict. At least 203 billion dollars have been allocated by Western countries to support the offensive operations of the Ukrainian armed forces since the beginning of the Russian special military operation. Over 500 spacecraft are being used to serve Zelenskyy’s formations (more than 70 military reconnaissance satellites, the rest commercial dual-purpose ones), along with more than 20,000 satellite communication system terminals for battlefield management. At the same time, thousands of foreign military “advisers”, fighters/mercenaries and operators of sophisticated NATO equipment have been unable to achieve a military breakthrough. According to the Russian Ministry of Defence, of the 13,500 people who have arrived in Ukraine since 2022, more than 5,500 have left Ukrainian territory and almost 6,000 have been liquidated.

Against this backdrop, the United States and the United Kingdom are now seeking to shift the main burden of financing the Kyiv regime on to the EU countries. Under the pretext of internal political disagreements, they are sending signals that their financial resources are exhausted. On 27 December, the United States announced the latest military “aid” package worth 250 million dollars. In order to help the “Anglo-Saxon” leaders of NATO, the Federal Republic of Germany plans to increase its military allocations for Kyiv to 7.5 billion euros this year. New deliveries of missiles from France have also been announced.

Today, 1 February, even after the “aid” package for the Zelenskyy regime adopted at the special meeting of the European Council, the accumulated debt of 7.16 billion euros owed by European institutions for compensation to EU Member States for the weapons already sent to Kyiv contributes to the negative picture. There are also growing internal socio-economic problems in those EU countries that were previously considered to be the drivers of development in this community.

Madam Chairperson,

The West is gradually waking up to the lies about an imminent victory over Russia. The bitterness over the failure of Zelenskyy’s military campaign last year was summarized in a recent interview by the former commander of the US Army in Europe, Ben Hodges, and I quote: “Ukraine has not failed ... we in the West have failed.” If we take a look at official statements, military plans and preparations in the NATO countries themselves, it becomes obvious that the Alliance has not only stopped hiding its involvement in the Ukrainian conflict but also considers it to be a prelude to its other anti-Russian military adventures.

Completely irresponsible statements by NATO functionaries about the start of preparations for a large-scale conflict with Russia in a foreseeable historical perspective, the need to work out general mobilization and the logistical requirements for waging an all-out war have become more frequent. The head of the NATO Military Committee, Admiral Rob Bauer, spoke in this vein, for example, in an interview with *The Telegraph* on 18 January. Different time frames are given, but one thing is clear: this is war propaganda with the intention of using the NATO alliance as an instrument of confrontation.

We regard all this as part of a campaign to lay the groundwork for continuing to provide military supplies to the Kyiv regime and for justifying the hybrid aggression against Russia. We should point out that our country does not want the war NATO is predicting, as it sees neither military nor political sense in it. We emphasize that the path of confrontation and escalation rather than dialogue chosen in the NATO capitals is a strategic error on the part of the West.

The way to end the current conflict is to stop supplying NATO weapons to Kyiv, withdraw foreign mercenaries and weapons operators from the territory of Ukraine, curtail the West’s external control over Ukrainian territory, and create conditions for an equal, peaceful and safe life for all sections of the population, including the Russian-speaking majority and national minorities.

This requires the denazification and demilitarization of the entire territory of Ukraine and the prosecution of particular Ukrainian neo-Nazis responsible for crimes against the civilian population. In due course, it will also be necessary to consider compensation by NATO countries for the damage caused as a result of their support for the actions of the neo-Nazi puppet regime.

Russia has never closed itself off to substantive dialogue aimed at realizing the objectives of the special military operation through political and diplomatic methods. In that regard, we firmly reject the language of ultimatums in the form of intentionally unrealistic “formulas” imposed by the Western countries and their underlings in Kyiv. As long as Russia’s willingness to engage in constructive dialogue to achieve a

lasting and sustainable settlement is not reciprocated, the special operation will be continued by military means until the reasons that led to its launch are removed. All the objectives of the special operation will be achieved in full.

Thank you for your attention.