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**STATEMENT BY
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THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1522nd MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

29 May 2025

**On the increasing military involvement of certain NATO and EU member States in
further confrontation in and around Ukraine**

Mr. Chairperson,

As stated by Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov on 28 May, Russia has drawn up a memorandum setting out its position on the principles for a settlement and on possible timelines for ending the hostilities and concluding a peace agreement. The Russian delegation, headed by Vladimir Medinsky, is ready to present this memorandum to the negotiators from Kyiv during the second round of the resumed direct Russian-Ukrainian consultations in Istanbul next Monday, 2 June, and to begin work on each of its points without delay. We emphasize that the settlement of the conflict must be based on eliminating its root causes, which were precipitated by European Union and NATO countries.

Following the previous round of consultations in Istanbul, an exchange of captured servicemen and detained civilians was conducted in the village of Novaya Huta in the Homiel region of the Republic of Belarus on 25 May, with the two sides swapping 1,000 prisoners each. A total of 880 military personnel and 120 civilians were returned to Russia from territories controlled by the Kyiv regime. This means that the agreements on the exchange reached during the direct Russian-Ukrainian contacts on 16 May have been implemented in full. We express our deep gratitude to the authorities of the Republic of Belarus for their comprehensive assistance in realizing this important humanitarian gesture.

The exchange is intended to help build trust in the negotiation process and is also a political signal aimed at neutralizing the attempts by our opponents to claim that Russia is not seeking peace. Our country is ready to continue direct contacts with Ukraine.

Despite the exchange that was conducted as a follow-up to the Istanbul negotiation process, 34 civilians from the Kursk region are currently still being unlawfully detained by the Kyiv regime in violation of the norms of international humanitarian law. It is important to ensure that these people are able to return to their homes without hindrance.

We note the attempts by a number of external forces that control and sponsor the Kyiv regime to disrupt the aforementioned exchange. These include the manifold increase since 20 May in the number of

attacks by the Ukrainian armed forces on Russian regions, carried out using unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and multiple-launch rocket systems manufactured in NATO countries. During the week from the evening of 20 May to the morning of 27 May, Russian air defence formations intercepted and destroyed at least 2,331 UAVs, including 1,465 UAVs outside the zone of the special military operation. There are fatalities and casualties among the civilian population.

The use of drones by the Kyiv regime's militants is directly facilitated by the States participating in the "drone coalition" set up at the initiative of the United Kingdom (which used the zeal of, ostensibly, Latvia as a formal cover for all this). Apart from the United Kingdom and the Baltic States, the "drone sponsors" of the Kyiv regime include several EU countries and also Canada, Australia and New Zealand. They all bear their share of the responsibility for assisting the Kyiv regime in committing crimes against the civilian population by means of UAVs.

For example, on 22 May, a woman born in 1990 was killed as a result of a drone strike on a civilian vehicle in the village of Vasilevka in the Zaporozhye region. Five children – three girls aged 11, 10 and 8, and two boys aged 11 and 8 – suffered moderate injuries.

On 21 May, the Ukrainian armed forces' drones attacked the roof of the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant's training centre, which houses the world's only full-scale reactor hall simulator. The attack on this civilian infrastructure facility constitutes a terrorist act that poses a direct threat to the security of the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant.

Other types of weapons supplied by NATO countries are also being used by the Ukrainian armed forces against the civilian population and non-military facilities. On 22 May, eight civilians, including a 16-year-old teenager, were injured when a HIMARS multiple-launch rocket system was used against a residential area in the village of Panteleymonovka in the Yasinovataya district of the Donetsk People's Republic. The next day, on 23 May, the same type of weapon was used to strike residential areas in the town of Lgov in the Kursk region – injuring 16 people, including two children, and damaging 64 houses and 28 apartments in three multistorey buildings.

Here is a straightforward question: were the objects that were hit military targets? The diplomats from NATO countries in this room will probably once again pretend that such victims simply do not exist. They will take, so to speak, a "convenient" position for the sake of dubious geopolitical gain, and will continue their criminal connivance with the atrocities perpetrated by the Kyiv regime.

In exactly the same way, they pretend that Russia and its interests do not exist and that there is no need to take them into account. It is quite obvious that the reckless actions of the most radical wing of the European NATO member countries, led by the United Kingdom, are aimed at preventing and disrupting any efforts to reach a settlement that would take Russia's interests into account. It is important for them to keep up the tension and bloodshed on our soil, provoking even greater armed escalation in the hope of an anti-Russian "geopolitical miracle". To this end, they are prepared to "take out of the picture" politicians at home who advocate for a just world, as well as openly express discontent with the current US administration in an effort to persuade US President Trump's team to support their unsuccessful anti-Russian military manoeuvres.

It is also clear that the Ukrainian armed forces and foreign mercenaries are using terrorist methods in carrying out targeted attacks against the civilian population and civilian infrastructure. Targets with no military significance are selected for destruction. In this connection, on 22 May, Russian President Vladimir Putin announced the decision to establish a security zone along the Russian-Ukrainian border in order to minimize the possibility of strikes by the armed forces of Ukraine on civilian infrastructure and the

risk of Ukrainian militants infiltrating Russian territory. Our military has already begun to carry out this task.

On 24 and 25 May, the Russian armed forces launched a massive strike using air-launched and sea- and ground-based precision weapons and UAVs against enterprises of the Ukrainian military-industrial complex that produce missile components, communications electronics, explosives, rocket fuel and unmanned combat aerial vehicles, and against electronic intelligence and satellite communications centres. Military targets were hit in the Chernihiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv, Khmelnytskyi, Kyiv, Mykolaiv, Odessa, Sumy, Ternopil and Zhytomyr regions.

Speculation by Western politicians about the Kyiv regime's alleged readiness for peace is accompanied by verbal interventions by members of the so-called coalition of the willing (or, more precisely, those wishing to continue the hostilities against Russia), which pursue an obvious goal: to disrupt the resumed direct Russian-Ukrainian dialogue, prevent military de-escalation and turn the armed conflict, in which our people are dying on both sides of the line of contact, into a never-ending conflict.

On 26 May, speaking at the WDR Europaforum televised event, German Federal Chancellor Friedrich Merz stated that the Kyiv regime's armed formations were not attacking civilian objects but were merely defending themselves. And therefore, he said, "there are no longer any range restrictions on weapons delivered to Ukraine" by NATO countries, in particular by Germany, France, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. Yesterday, Mr. Merz repeated these words, and the German Federal Ministry of Defence gave the order to provide the Kyiv regime with 5 billion euros for military spending. This includes long-range weapons, which will allegedly be manufactured in regime-controlled territories rather than imported from NATO member countries with "made in Ukraine" labels. At the same time, regardless of any possible developments in the negotiations, Germany insists that it will continue to arm the Kyiv regime while "hoping for a ceasefire". And, for some reason, it does not see this position as being contradictory to, or obviously dissonant with, the efforts of countries that are genuinely seeking to bring peace closer. In this way, Germany is becoming increasingly involved in anti-Russian actions under the pretext of the Ukrainian conflict. As Sergey Lavrov noted, in doing so, it is sliding down the same slippery slope it has already been on several times in the past century – down to its own collapse. There is still hope that responsible politicians in Germany will draw the right conclusions and stop this madness.

The leadership of the United Kingdom is also taking specific steps to maintain and stoke the military confrontation. It recently announced its intention to transfer to the Kyiv regime 3 billion dollars' worth of stolen proceeds from Russian financial assets illegitimately frozen in Western jurisdictions.

The extent to which the claims that the Kyiv regime is not striking civilian targets are false can be gauged not only by considering the facts I have just mentioned, but also by looking at the overall statistics of casualties in recent days: over the past two weeks, strikes by Volodymyr Zelenskyy's armed formations claimed at least 230 civilian casualties in various regions of Russia. Of these, 26 people were killed and another 204 were injured, including 11 children.

Lurking behind the rhetoric of the Kyiv regime's sponsors about the regime's alleged striving for peace are, in fact, all too obvious plans to militarize the European continent, consolidate the anti-Russian paradigm in political and military development and prepare for the waging of an armed conflict of high intensity. As is well known, in early March 2025, a long-term road map for rearming the EU Member States ("ReArm Europe") was announced that envisages around 800 billion euros being mobilized to meet military needs, including through loans and the reallocation of budgetary resources. All of these actions are in keeping with the logic of escalation.

The EU leadership's short-sighted policy of supporting the "Anglo-Saxon" geopolitical adventure in Ukraine has already led to virtually zero growth in the economies of European countries. If they haven't fallen into a recession, their economies are most certainly stagnating. One of the most dramatic situations is unfolding in the German economy, which has not grown for the third year in a row. But even against this backdrop, the new authorities in Berlin are talking about providing support to the warmongering Kyiv regime without thinking about the consequences of this dead-end path.

This is having an impact on many areas. On 20 May this year, in an interview with the *Berliner Zeitung*, EU Commissioner for Agriculture and Food Christophe Hansen expressed concern about EU plans to invest up to 800 billion euros in the production of weapons and ammunition. In particular, he warned that the path to militarization through cuts in agricultural funding could jeopardize Europe's food security and have serious consequences for farmers and the food sector.

Perhaps this is why the European Union decided to "put the brakes" on so-called solidarity with Ukraine by announcing its intention not to extend duty-free imports of Ukrainian agricultural products after 6 June. After all, Ukraine is now needed only as a geopolitical tool against Russia, and its inhabitants – as cannon fodder in this struggle.

The leadership of the Kyiv regime itself makes no secret of the fact that it agrees to play this role in the interests of its foreign sponsors. Regime officials have repeatedly stated that, since 2014, one of their objectives has been to "carry out a NATO mission" in the struggle with Russia, for which the Alliance had been "preparing itself for decades" (the then Defence Minister Oleksii Reznikov stated this on several occasions in 2022 and 2023), and also to "destroy Russia as a State" (this was explicitly stated by the then Secretary of the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine, Oleksii Danilov, in 2022).

We have not yet observed any change to this approach. On 23 May, the deputy head of Mr. Zelenskyy's office, Iryna Vereshchuk, made a policy statement in which she underlined the key principle of the strategy being implemented: to pose a long-term military threat to Russia's security by any means. Elaborating on the message that our country is an "enemy for decades, if not centuries", Ms. Vereshchuk called for the minds of Ukrainian children to be militarized from school, I quote: "[That is] our strategy, and we lay it down from school ... our children must prepare, they must know what war is." Excuse me, but prepare for what?

In Kyiv, there is great fear that, against the backdrop of the obvious failures of the Ukrainian armed forces on the battlefield, its sponsors will turn away from the "Ukraine project" as unprofitable and failing to deliver the desired results. It is no coincidence, for example, that on 23 May, Mykhailo Podolyak, an adviser to Mr. Zelenskyy's office, stated in an interview with *Le Point* that Ukraine, "cannot allow the United States to withdraw from this war" (judging by all appearances, Mr. Podolyak publicly issued a kind of personal ultimatum to the US leadership). The head of the Ministry of Finance of Ukraine, Sergii Marchenko, even suggested that European countries directly allocate a part of their gross domestic product to finance the Ukrainian armed forces and enshrine this in law.

Meanwhile, the Kyiv regime's armed formations are suffering one defeat after another on the battlefield. They are experiencing objective problems relating to making up for losses in manpower, ammunition, weapons and equipment, air defence systems, logistics and so on. The following settlements have been liberated over the past week alone: Stupochki, Otradoye, Bogatyr, Aleksandropol, Novoyelenovka, Novaya Poltavka, Kotlyarovka, Romanovka, Staraya Nikolayevka and Zelenoye Pole in the Donetsk People's Republic; Loknya, Maryino, Vladimirovka, Belovody and Konstantinovka in the Sumy region; and Radkovka and adjacent areas in the Kharkiv region. The less the Kyiv regime is inclined towards realistic diplomacy, the less territory it controls with each passing day.

To wrap up. Our country's position on the parameters for a settlement, which it is important to make into a sustainable one, has not changed since the start of the special military operation. In Russia we are ready for constructive co-operation with those responsible members of the Western elite who genuinely want to de-escalate and stabilize the security situation around Ukraine, on the European continent and in the world. With those who are ready to work substantively on proposals that are genuinely aimed at achieving long-term peace, taking into account our country's legitimate security interests.

When it comes to protecting its interests, Russia is prepared to – and will – use all the means and resources at its disposal.

Thank you for your attention.