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**STATEMENT BY
THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AT THE
1402nd MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

15 December 2022

On dangerous provocations by the Kyiv regime with the support of a Western alliance of OSCE participating States, and on the regime's ongoing crimes against the civilian population

Mr. Chairperson,

Over this past year, the Ukrainian issue has become the predominant one in the OSCE's work. It has to be said that the Polish Chairmanship stirred up an artificial fuss over it, to the detriment of all other areas of our Organization's work and overtly applying double standards.

One must point out from the outset that there would have been no need for the Russian special military operation, had the so-called collective West not interfered in the domestic political affairs of Ukraine over many years, had it not encouraged Ukraine's bellicose, neo-Nazi-minded regime, had it not invested in the country's militarization and in the military assimilation of its territory by NATO. The starting point for the current developments was not the events in February of this year, as many are trying to make out, but the February 2014 coup d'état, which was orchestrated, funded and organized from abroad, and which plunged Ukraine into a maelstrom of unceasing armed violence.

The Russian special operation to protect the civilian population against the abuses it had been subjected to by the Kyiv regime over many years, and to demilitarize and denazify Ukraine, was initiated in the context of the OSCE's long-standing failure to play a constructive role in the implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 2202, which endorsed the Minsk Package of Measures of 12 February 2015 – in particular, as regards promoting the political dialogue envisaged by the resolution with a view to bringing about a sustainable settlement.

Today it is obvious that the Western countries which undertook to act as guarantors of the implementation of the Minsk agreements, or expressed their support for these, in reality used them as a smokescreen for strengthening the military capability of the Kyiv regime and preparing it for combat operations. Former German Chancellor Angela Merkel bluntly admitted that last week, when she opened up about how the Minsk agreements had just been meant to win precious time for the Kyiv regime and to strengthen it militarily.

All this not only raises legitimate questions as to what the so-called mediation efforts by representatives of Germany or other members of the collective West are really worth, but also serves as eloquent testimony to their attitude towards international law. As we can see from this and other topics, the West's highly selective approach and its "stunning level of absurdity" when it comes to the stipulations of United Nations Security Council resolutions are very much in keeping with the logic of the "rules-based order". It all highlights the long-standing insincerity of their representatives, including those in this room. While arguing that there was no alternative to the Minsk agreements, they in fact did not make any meaningful efforts to facilitate their implementation – on the contrary, they encouraged the Kyiv regime as it brazenly sabotaged all the agreed provisions.

Attempts to use diplomacy as a cover for disinformation and deceit are destroying trust, not least within our Organization. We regret that Ms. Merkel's revelations about the Minsk agreements attest to this very fact. As one can understand, already when the agreements were being drawn up the so-called co-mediators were working on the assumption that they would never be implemented. There is something quite horrible at the bottom of all this, namely, the fact that deceit and deception are tools of the trade for a number of Western politicians.

Over the past few years, an accelerated transformation of Ukraine into a forward bridgehead of NATO has been under way, while at the same time the Russian Federation has been designated as an adversary in doctrinal documents of the Ukrainian Government and the North Atlantic Alliance itself. NATO's military assimilation of the territory of our nearest neighbour, its pursuit of the full militarization of Ukraine and the pumping of weapons into that country, the way in which it is encouraging the severance of the manifold historical ties between the peoples living in Ukraine and Russia – all this can hardly be described as a contribution by NATO to the strengthening of pan-European security. Ukraine has essentially been hijacked to be used as a "battering ram" against Russian statehood. This is openly admitted nowadays among the leaders of certain countries, who with the help of Ukraine are seeking to somehow inflict a "strategic defeat" on Russia.

The NATO member States' proxy war using the supporters of the Kyiv regime to fight against Russians and Ukrainians is being waged, on both sides of the Russian-Ukrainian border, with the extensive involvement of modern weapons and technologies. By supplying these to that played-out regime (in violation, incidentally, of export controls) and encouraging its policy of continuing the hostilities, the foreign sponsors of the Ukrainian "authorities" are making the prospects of peace in Ukraine more remote and contributing to an even greater number of casualties and even more destruction. To say nothing of the fact that, in this confrontation with Russia foisted on them by the West, the inhabitants of Ukraine themselves have been assigned the unenviable role of serving as cannon fodder.

The Ukraine of today has in effect been subjugated to the logic of the neocolonial policies of the United States of America and its allies. The country's economy is on artificial respiration, as it were – administered in the form of loans that, for some reason, are termed "assistance". After the 2014 coup d'état, key appointments in Ukraine have been remotely steered. Among the most striking examples it is worth recalling how Joe Biden admitted that, during his tenure as US Vice President, he had personally seen to it that a Prosecutor General of Ukraine who was not to his liking was "fired" "in six hours". It is also worth taking a look at the recent comments by the ambassadors of the countries belonging to the Group of Seven regarding the reform of the Constitutional Court of Ukraine, in which they dictate requirements for the further implementation of that reform and explicitly lay down tasks for the Ukrainian legislators.

Certain countries are taking direct advantage of the current situation for commercial gain and simultaneously to settle geopolitical scores. Some results of the US efforts to weaken the European Union as a global player are already evident. Illegitimate from an international law perspective, the EU's anti-Russian

economic restrictions have not had the desired effect as far as Russia is concerned; however, they have proved ruinous for several sectors of European industry, which is steadily migrating offshore. The EU leadership's non-market economic decisions in the energy market, together with acts of sabotage against infrastructure for the transport of resources, have led to a large-scale energy crisis in Europe.

At the same time, exploiting the political situation that has arisen following the launching of the Russian special military operation, the United States is actively touting military goods from its own military-industrial complex on the European market. By forcing the Europeans to supply arms to the Kyiv regime, the US Government is "prepping" the market for its weaponry and military equipment.

Overall, through their actions, the United States and its vassal countries are deliberately prolonging the armed confrontation in Ukraine. To chants of "Euro-Atlantic solidarity", a myth about some imaginary "Russian threat" is being foisted on the European public. Moreover, Russia's legitimate security concerns are being demonstratively ignored. At the same time, potential and real hotbeds of additional tensions are being created near our borders with the sprawling of NATO military infrastructure.

As we have seen, throughout this year, representatives of the Western alliance have sought, under the pretext of the situation in Ukraine, to get the whole OSCE, its structures and its specialized institutions to toe their line. We note the Polish Chairmanship's fiasco on the Ukrainian issue, its sinking so low as to engage in the relaying of spurious geopolitical antipathies, instead of organizing dialogue within the OSCE to tackle the disagreements that have accumulated.

It is difficult to explain to the public in our countries why bias has gained the upper hand among the OSCE leadership, why there is no longer not even a hint of impartial analysis of the situation. It is not clear why the prevailing approach is to hush up the crimes of the Kyiv regime, as though these did not exist at all. Why has not a single victim of the brutal shelling attacks by Ukrainian armed formations been found worthy of attention or words of sympathy from the OSCE leadership? Why does the Kyiv regime's use of prohibited munitions to kill residents of the Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics and other Russian citizens not elicit any reaction whatsoever in the work of the OSCE structures? Over the past two weeks alone, more than 80 people have been killed and over 300 have been injured as a result of massive shelling of the city of Donetsk and its outskirts using NATO weapons. Children are among the casualties of these targeted attacks against the civilian population. It so happens that, this very morning, 40 Ukrainian rockets fired by Grad multiple-launch rocket systems landed in the Donetsk city centre. No military facilities were located in that area. There are civilian casualties, including children. This is terrorism against the civilian population, pure and simple. Again, where is the OSCE's response?

The same applies to the irresponsible actions by the Kyiv regime's formations near and against nuclear facilities, including the numerous instances of shelling and other types of attack against the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, and likewise to the use of chemical industry facilities for the purposes of military provocations. The Ukrainian armed forces' actions near such facilities in Rubizhne (Luhansk People's Republic), near the Sumykhimprom plant and other places have been a source of grave concern. Last week, on 6 December, the Stirol chemical plant in Horlivka (Donetsk People's Republic) again came under shelling by Ukrainian formations, causing a fire at a sulphur storage facility.

This year, the regime has intensified its attacks on the foundations of democracy, including religious freedoms. As we have already mentioned, unprecedented pressure continues to be exerted on Ukrainian Orthodoxy. Bizarrely, the brazen interference in ecclesiastical affairs is not eliciting any reaction on the part of the relevant OSCE structures. A few days ago, President Zelenskyy ratified a decision of the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine to impose personal restrictive measures against seven Ukrainian

Orthodox Church hierarchs. Reports continue to come in of places of worship being seized and of church property being appropriated from the legitimate owners.

We must stress once again that the current crisis is a consequence of the actions of the Kyiv regime and its foreign sponsors, which decided to stake everything on war and unrestrained militarization while generously dispensing promises to strive for peace. Moreover, the foreign handlers have in effect given their protégés in Kyiv carte blanche for radical nationalism, Russophobia and the forcible suppression of dissent in their own country.

The announcements currently being made by several NATO countries about their preparing to supply further shipments of lethal weapons to Ukraine are, in our view, a continuation of the irresponsible policy aimed at inciting a military escalation in Ukraine. This is also how we perceive the participation of foreign mercenaries and regular military personnel from NATO countries in the fighting in Ukraine. Speaking of which, we have noted the self-revealing remarks made to *The Times* by a British officer, Lieutenant General Robert Magowan, about Royal Marines conducting “discreet operations in a hugely sensitive environment and with a high level of political and military risk”.

We would emphasize in this regard that the objectives of the Russian special operation will be accomplished. Russia will continue to consistently defend, with all available means, its legitimate national interests, including the elimination of threats to the security of our country.

Thank you for your attention.