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**STATEMENT BY
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RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS ON MILITARY
SECURITY AND ARMS CONTROL, AT THE 1097th PLENARY MEETING OF
THE OSCE FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION**

12 February 2025

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

Mr. Chairperson,

The armed forces of the Russian Federation continue to accomplish the tasks set by Russian President Vladimir Putin in connection with the violent confrontation with the collective West, which is using Ukraine as an anti-Russian military bridgehead in a vain attempt to inflict a “strategic defeat” on our country.

The enemy’s combat potential is being systematically reduced. Over the past week, Russian precision-guided weapons have inflicted significant damage on Ukraine’s military-industrial complex, and group strikes have been carried out against military airfield infrastructure, against places where unmanned combat aerial vehicles (UAVs) are stored and prepared for use, and against clusters of the enemy’s military equipment in some 150 districts.

The Ukrainian armed forces have largely lost the ability to produce the necessary weapons, equipment and ammunition. It has become clear that even the quality of the reserves being trained by Western instructors in a number of NATO countries is far below the expectations of the “strategists” in Kyiv. Following in the footsteps of the French-trained 155th Brigade, the German-trained 153rd Brigade is also experiencing mass desertions amid supply and support problems.

In these circumstances, the Kyiv regime is doing all it can to prove to its masters that it is still capable of at least some kind of military “victory”. On 6 February, the Ukrainian armed forces made another suicidal attempt at a counteroffensive in the Kursk region with up to two mechanized battalions. A whole menagerie of Western armoured vehicles was involved, including German-made Marder armoured infantry fighting vehicles, US-made Bradley armoured infantry fighting vehicles and M1126 Stryker armoured personnel carriers, various other armoured vehicles and US-made M1150 mine clearance engineer vehicles. Judging by the direction of the strikes, the purpose of this doomed offensive was to try to save the Ukrainian garrison in Sudzha, which is occupied by the Ukrainian armed forces, from a critical situation. But the victory again failed to materialize. All eight waves of attacks were repulsed, and the militants’ losses totalled

more than 200 people and some 50 items of weapons and military equipment. It is no surprise that, according to the Land Forces Command of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, more than half a million Ukrainians are now wanted for evading mobilization – no one wants to serve as cannon fodder for a regime in its death throes, one that now intends to throw even 18-year-olds into the trenches.

The fact that the Ukrainian armed forces' defence continues to crumble along many parts of the front is also evidenced by the steady advance of our armed forces in the zone of the special military operation.

Over the past two weeks, Russian troops have liberated Novomylnsk in the Kharkiv region and Velika Novosyolka, Orekhovo-Vasilevka, Yasenevo and Dzerzhinsk in the Donetsk People's Republic, the latter being a powerful stronghold of the Ukrainian armed forces with an extensive network of underground communications. In order to hold the city, the Ukrainian command pulled together an impressive force of eight brigades, including Azov Nazis and foreign mercenaries, which suffered serious losses. More than 240 tanks and other armoured vehicles and 340 field artillery pieces and mortars were destroyed, and the Ukrainian armed forces lost more than 26,000 fighters. The operation also liberated 11 settlements in the Dzerzhinsk conurbation, where peaceful life will gradually return.

During the five months of fierce fighting for Dzerzhinsk, Ukrainian neo-Nazis took their military failures out on the residents of nearby Gorlovka. Every day they carried out strikes on civilian objects, shot at the city with cluster munitions and attacked the city's passenger transport with drones. According to the mayor of Gorlovka, Ivan Prikhodko, the city came under fire from the Ukrainian armed forces more than 18,000 times. As a result, not one children's educational institution in the city remained intact: all 52 schools and 50 kindergartens were damaged, with one school destroyed completely. One such institution was the Gorlovka school of arts, which in September 2024 took an active part in the "The world of peace: a child's dream" event jointly organized by the Russian delegation and the team of Rodion Miroshnik, the Russian Foreign Ministry's Ambassador-at-Large. The children, who were born after the start of Ukraine's punitive operation against the population of Donbass in 2014 and grew up under a hail of bullets, drew how they imagined a peaceful life without hostilities, a life that they have never seen. And now the Ukrainian punitive forces are continuing to deprive them of their childhood.

It is telling that, recently, the enemy has made increasing use of highly destructive US and Czech weapons against non-combatants, which is a flagrant violation of the basic principles of international humanitarian law. The shelling of populated areas in Donbass, the Kherson and Zaporozhye regions, Crimea and other Russian regions testifies to the death throes of the Zelenskyy regime, which is mired in terrorism and seeks to kill as many Russians, Ukrainians, Jews and Crimean Tatars as possible to please its Western masters.

Here are just a few examples. On 8 February, the Ukrainian armed forces deliberately attacked densely populated areas of Rostov-on-Don, damaging 14 houses. On the same day, strikes were launched against Makeevka in the Donetsk People's Republic. Two women were killed as a result of the pre-planned and carefully prepared shelling of the central part of the city, and nine people, including two children, were injured. Drone attacks continue to be a daily occurrence in the Belgorod region, where last week three residents were killed in a strike on a civilian car and three others were injured in a UAV attack on a residential building.

We strongly condemn the acts of terrorism perpetrated by the Kyiv regime. We call upon all responsible Governments and international bodies to condemn these latest acts of terrorism. Silence in response to the Kyiv regime's barbarity is tantamount to complicity in its actions.

Mr. Chairperson,

We can see that EU and NATO countries are trying to prevent the cessation of hostilities in Ukraine. Their military assistance is the basis for prolonging the Kyiv regime's existence.

On 30 January, Sweden announced a record tranche of aid to the Ukrainian armed forces worth 1.2 billion dollars.

On 31 January, Ukrainian Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal announced that Ukraine expected to receive 2.5 billion pounds for its military needs from the United Kingdom under the "100-year partnership agreement".

On 1 February, NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte lamented in an interview with *Bild* that the front line was moving in the wrong direction.

On 3 February, President Emmanuel Macron promised to double the country's military budget, and on 6 February, French Minister of the Armed Forces Sébastien Lecornu announced the transfer of the first batch of Mirage 2000 fighter jets to Ukraine.

At the same time, the Western States blocking dialogue at the OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation on the management of stockpiles of small arms and light weapons are silent on the fact that the uncontrolled pumping of weapons into Ukraine is fostering the growth of arms smuggling beyond its borders. It is noteworthy that the Ukrainian media themselves have repeatedly highlighted the desire of their fellow citizens and foreign business people to profit from arms supplies to the Ukrainian armed forces.

Just think about these figures: Ukraine has seen a 40-fold increase in crimes committed with the use of illegal weapons and ammunition. In 2024, internal affairs bodies registered over 11,000 offences. More than 2.2 million units of ammunition were confiscated from Ukrainian citizens. More than 6,000 weapons, mainly small arms and anti-tank missile systems, and more than 7.2 tonnes of explosives were found and seized. The main source of weapons for the black market are the fighters from the Ukrainian armed forces themselves – deserters or persons who have left their military units without authorization. At the same time, it is known that members of the Security Service of Ukraine are also involved in smuggling schemes, using their connections abroad to establish contacts with criminal circles and build channels for the supply of weapons and military equipment.

One of the main transit hubs for illegal weapons from Ukraine is Moldova. The weapons are then transported to Romania, Bulgaria, North Macedonia and Albania. The port of Odessa is actively used to ship weapons from Ukraine to the Middle East, Africa and Europe. How long can we keep silent here about the fact that Western weapons are going missing, ending up on the black market even, and are then finding their way back to EU and NATO member countries?

According to the reports presented in the third quarter of 2024 to the US Congress by the Inspector General of the US Department of Defense, Robert Storch, the main factors contributing to the creation of conditions for arms smuggling from Ukraine are:

- The failure of US military officials responsible for accounting for and monitoring military assistance to Ukraine to ensure accountability in the transfer of weapons and military equipment;
- The deliberate concealment of information about the original departure point of the ATACMS tactical missiles, ground-launched small diameter bombs, joint direct attack munition aerial bombs,

artillery ammunition and explosives provided to Ukraine, and also the absence of accompanying documentation confirming the list of weapons and military equipment and the fact that monitoring was carried out during the removal of the weapons from US arsenals and the preparation of the cargo for further transport to Ukraine; and

- The difficulties in determining the number of Soviet-made tank and mortar shells transferred to the Ukrainian armed forces via Romania due to the failure to comply with the procedure for physical inventory taking and the destruction of packing records with the item identification required for accounting.

Not surprisingly, weapons and ammunition supplied to the Ukrainian armed forces are subsequently discovered in conflict zones. The main recipients of such weapons are private military companies, terrorist organizations and transnational criminal groups. For example, Czech-made vz.58 automatic assault rifles and vz.61 Škorpion automatic rifles, as well as RPG-75s and the rounds for them, were seized during the US armed forces' operation against ISIS in Syria. A preliminary examination of the markings revealed that the weapons were donated to the Ukrainian armed forces from the Czech Ministry of Defence's stockpiles in March 2023 and January 2024.

According to foreign experts, the high level of corruption in the Ukrainian leadership has a significant impact on the growth of illegal arms trafficking. Speaking to Associated Press correspondents on 1 February, Volodymyr Zelenskyy openly stated that Ukraine had received only 75 billion of the 177 billion dollars promised by the United States. "When they say that Ukraine ... received 200 billion dollars to support the army ... this is not true. I don't know where all this money is." Not surprisingly, the new head of the US Federal Bureau of Investigation, Kash Patel, expressed his intention to investigate the misuse of funds for the needs of the Kyiv regime. In addition, he clearly stated that Mr. Zelenskyy's words could not be trusted because he had been lying too much and for too long,

We should like to warn you once again. By continuing the reckless supply of weapons and ammunition to Ukraine, the Western participating States are grossly violating the OSCE politico-military commitments to which they themselves subscribed: Principles Governing Conventional Arms Transfers (1993), Section III, part A of the OSCE Document on Small Arms and Light Weapons (2000) and OSCE Principles for Export Controls of Man-Portable Air Defence Systems (2008). It seems that, for many NATO and EU States, these agreements have also fallen victim to the culture of "cancelling" anything that the West is not happy with. This, in particular, was discussed in detail by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Sergey Lavrov, at an embassy round-table discussion in Moscow on 5 February.

There are many examples of Western States "cancelling" the provisions of not only OSCE politico-military agreements but also the Charter of the United Nations and UN Security Council decisions. For example, resolution 2202, which unanimously endorsed the Minsk agreements, was "cancelled". Instead of implementing the Minsk Package of Measures concluded exactly ten years ago – on 12 February 2015 – Germany and France, as co-mediators of the settlement, have spent the following years indulging the criminal regime in Kyiv, turning a blind eye to its crimes in Donbass and trying to buy time for the regime to prepare for war against Russia. The leaders of the Normandy format – German Chancellor Angela Merkel, French President François Hollande and Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko – openly confessed to this later.

This led to an escalation of the military and political situation on the continent and brought to the surface critical problems in the area of international security and conventional arms control, as we have discussed today. Through the efforts of the United States, the European Union and NATO, the crisis has

grown to such proportions that its resolution is no longer possible without addressing such systemic issues as security guarantees and the fundamental parameters of interaction between Russia and the West.

We are ready for dialogue on a settlement concerning Ukraine, but only on an equal and mutually acceptable basis. For now, legal obstacles remain, including the illegitimacy of the Kyiv regime and Ukraine's statutory ban on peace negotiations. We need to recognize the realities and address the root causes that led us to launch the special operation, including NATO's eastward expansion and the violation of the rights of ethnic Russians and Russian speakers in Ukraine. This whole accumulated knot of problems will have to be untied once the West and Ukraine show real, practical interest. Otherwise, this Gordian knot will have to be cut. Russia's position on this matter is well known to everyone.

Thank you for your attention.