

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY
MR. ANDREY KELIN, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1045th MEETING OF
THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

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On the growth of racism, radicalism and neo-Nazism in the OSCE area

Mr. Chairperson,

The growth in manifestations of racism, violent extremism, aggressive nationalism and neo-Nazism remain, as ever, one of the most serious threats in the OSCE area.

Unfortunately, the work in the OSCE to combat the spread of radical and neo-Nazi views within society is not being done systematically. Despite commitments in this area, there is no single OSCE action plan as there is for combating trafficking in human beings, improving the situation of Roma and Sinti or promoting gender equality.

Every OSCE country has its problems connected with the growth of radicalism and nationalistic extremism. Russia is not immune to these abhorrent phenomena either. The approaches to resolving these problems in the OSCE participating States vary though. In our country, there is a package of comprehensive measures in place, ranging from criminal to practical, to nip these threats in the bud. Neo-Nazis and anyone else who incites racial hatred are either in prison or will end up there sooner or later.

However, in many countries, including those that are proud to count themselves among the established democracies, people close their eyes to such phenomena or justify these activities with reference to freedom of speech, assembly and association.

We are surprised at the position taken by the European Union, which attempts to find justification for neo-Nazi demonstrations and gatherings sometimes through particular historical circumstances and grievances and sometimes under the banner of democracy.

For more than 20 years, rallies of Waffen SS veterans, who shamefully collaborated with Hitler's Wehrmacht, have been taking place in Latvia. On 16 March 2015, those who served in this punitive battalion once again marched with honour to the Freedom Monument in Riga. This is by no means a memorial event – the most significant political events are celebrated at this monument, and what is most dangerous is that the European Union's

complacency and the Latvian authorities' historical revisionism have moulded a young generation who are proud to march alongside former members of the SS.

Year in year out, young nationalists hold mass rallies in Lithuania under the slogan "Lithuania for the Lithuanians". The most recent took place in February in Kaunas (with swastikas on display) and in March in Vilnius. Where was the response from the authorities and Brussels, one might ask.

Year after year, Waffen SS veterans gather in Estonia. On 19 February, the Estonian Prime Minister re-established meetings and receptions in honour of the legionnaires of the 20th Waffen SS Grenadier Division and other persons who fought alongside the Nazis. On 24 February, a torchlit procession of young nationalists took place in Tallinn. Among the deputies who entered parliament in March from the Conservative People's Party of Estonia was the notorious leader of the youth wing Jaak Madison, who revealed in social media his sympathies for Nazi Germany's economic model. In January 2015, a stamp was issued in honour of the Estonian collaborationist Jüri Uluots, who actively co-operated with the authorities of Nazi Germany. Scandalous works that mocked the memory of the victims of the Holocaust were removed from an exhibition at Tartu Art Museum in February this year only after protests by the Jewish community and other national minorities.

Worrying phenomena are also observed in other European Union States. The so-called Lukov March – a neo-Nazi torchlit procession – once again took place in Bulgaria. Nazi symbols are regularly seen in stadiums. The Bulgarian National Union and Warriors of Tangra non-governmental organizations (NGOs) disseminate anti-immigrant and anti-Roma views in social media.

In France the growth of racism, anti-Semitism and religious intolerance is becoming a steady trend. Associations with Nazi sympathies, for example Union de la droite nationale, Bloc Identitaire and Groupe Union Défense, are quite active. How does this approach correlate with the heroic struggle of the French Resistance?

A number of right-wing extremist groups advocating national and racial exclusivity operate in Norway. They include the Norwegian Defence League and the Norwegian Resistance Movement (one of their goals being to create a northern European Reich).

Our colleagues across the ocean are not immune to these problems either. There are still any number of organizations preaching neo-Nazi and racist ideas in the United States of America, including branches of the Ku Klux Klan. Much can be gleaned from the recent Equality Justice Initiative report about the widespread practice of lynchings in states in the United States of America with a large African American population.

In Canada a number of movements openly promote the theory of racial superiority. For example, the Nationalist Party of Canada, the Aryan Guard and the leader of a number of pro-Nazi NGOs Paul Fromm, who appears on television advocating the purity of the white race. The activities of Ukrainian nationalists, including collaborators from the Galician SS Division and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army, do not incite criticism in Canada.

As for Ukraine, the transformation of a country whose people suffered huge losses during the Great Patriotic War, whose mothers, wives and children were tortured by the Nazis and whose fathers and grandfathers fought in the ranks of the Red Army into a State where

neo-Nazi formations operate openly is beyond comprehension. How could it happen that a nation in which every family was touched by the tragedy of war condones torchlit processions (the most recent was in January in Kyiv) or insults to the veterans of the Great Patriotic War whom the neo-Nazis refer to as “Colorados” because of the colour of the St. George’s victory ribbon? How can such slogans as “Yids, Moskali and Polacks – out of Ukraine”, “the only good Moskal is a dead Moskal”, swastikas on the chevrons of volunteer battalions, desecration of memorials to Soviet soldiers and the Babi Yar memorial be allowed? Finally, how come Ukraine is the only OSCE country where Nazi units (Right Sector) have been incorporated into the power structures? Why is the Svoboda Party, which a few years ago was not a party with which one could do business in Europe, no longer rejected by the European political élite? How is it possible to remain unresponsive to the falsification of history (the Baltic scenario) when the atrocities of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army, who have thousands of slaughtered peaceable Ukrainians, Jews and Poles on their conscience, are honoured as the exploits of freedom fighters? How can the international community remain silent when Stepan Bandera, who shamefully co-operated with the Nazis and wrote letters of allegiance to Hitler, becomes virtually a symbol of the new Ukraine?

As we approach the 70th anniversary of the victory in the Second World War, it would not hurt for all of us to refresh our memory of the Nuremberg documents (which, incidentally, were supported by 187 countries of the world) and other thematic decisions adopted within the United Nations system and the OSCE. Perhaps then the scales will finally fall from the eyes of some participating States and they will realize that the freedom to disseminate misanthropic views and the freedom of assembly of neo-Nazis threaten the existence of civilization itself, and that only a uniform rejection and combined efforts to combat these threats will make it possible to erect a barrier to stop the resurgence of “superior nations”, “superior races” and “superpowers”. There is nothing dividing us in this difficult work. We simply need to roll up our sleeves and make things happen.

Thank you for your attention.