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**STATEMENT BY
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RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS ON MILITARY
SECURITY AND ARMS CONTROL, AT THE 1133rd PLENARY MEETING OF
THE OSCE FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION**

22 April 2026

Agenda item: Opening session under the Georgian Chairmanship

Mr. Chairperson,

We congratulate you on the commencement of your Chairmanship of the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC). We listened carefully to the Georgian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ms. Maka Botchorishvili, who presented the Chairmanship's programme of work and priorities within the framework of this autonomous OSCE decision-making body. The plans are quite ambitious. We agree with you on the need to revitalize the activities of the FSC as a unique platform for discussing issues related to politico-military security in Europe. To achieve this, dialogue is essential above all, as is a willingness to listen to the opposite side. Only then will the Chairmanship be able to act on behalf of the FSC, that is, on behalf of all the participating States without exception, as laid down in the Rules of Procedure of the OSCE.

The start of this latest round of negotiations has overlapped with unprecedented shifts in the modern system of international relations. Over the past few months, events have taken place that would have seemed impossible just a few years ago. Disregard – for the sake of achieving geopolitical goals – of the fundamental pillars of international law, refusal to acknowledge and take into account the vital interests of other States, and attempts to secure unchallenged military superiority at any cost and in violation of cardinal OSCE principles are creating a fundamentally new reality in the realm of international security. The number of States facing destruction as a result of aggression is steadily rising, while a mandate from the people is no longer regarded as a safeguard against military intervention. It is outrageous that interference in the internal affairs of sovereign States has, for some, become standard practice, with justifications for each specific case being cobbled together on the fly, without any particular “frills” embellishing the arguments or accusations levelled at the object of such attention on the part of the “champions of democracy”. Incidentally, Georgia, too, has had first-hand experience of something similar in the very recent past.

Against this backdrop, the militaristic anti-Russian rhetoric of European countries continues to be backed up by concrete practical steps. Between February 2022 and 2025, the EU Member States ramped up their defence expenditure by almost 60 per cent. Last year, these appropriations reached 381 billion euros, which is the second-highest level in the world after the United States of America. Officially, the objective is to enhance Europe's “defence capability” by 2030. However, an increase in military appropriations will only

be possible if expenditure on other budget items – primarily social spending – is cut. Such large-scale preparations leave no doubt that Europe is not interested in long-term, stable peace in the OSCE area, but is setting the stage for a major war against Russia. In this politico-military equation, Ukraine is merely a “variable” being used to advance narrowly self-serving politico-military objectives – namely, to enable Europe to prepare for a future conflict.

Another highly dangerous incipient trend is the increasing frequency with which a number of Western countries without nuclear weapons are planting information in the media about the possibility of developing their own weapons of this kind or hosting foreign nuclear weapons on their territory. In particular, we are hearing statements to that effect from Germany, Poland, Finland, Sweden and other countries. Such destabilizing schemes as “joint nuclear missions” and “expanded nuclear deterrence”, in which the United States and its allies are engaging, are having a destructive impact on the situation. The United Kingdom and France have initiated efforts to develop certain capabilities for a “Europe-wide nuclear deterrent” to complement the US “nuclear umbrella”.

We are also observing how NATO is building up its military potential and expanding its presence in key geographical areas. However, the greatest cause for concern is the Alliance’s continuously increasing activity right on our country’s western borders, under the pretext of an imaginary “Russian threat”. At present, the Baltic-Scandinavian region is being “developed” accordingly with particular intensity. Along with northern Europe, the Arctic, which was previously a space of peaceful coexistence and co-operation, is now regarded in Brussels as the most likely zone for confrontation with Russia. The bloc is exploring ways to enhance its military capabilities across all operational environments.

In general, the situation regarding NATO’s inordinate militaristic ambitions is highly telling. When it was advantageous to the opposite side, we were given verbal assurances that the Alliance would not be expanded (“not one inch eastward”) in return for the USSR’s consent to German reunification. Subsequently, at the OSCE Summit in Istanbul in 1999, the Charter for European Security was adopted. It spelled out that the security of all participating States must be indivisible, that no one should enhance their security at the expense of the security of others, and that no country, group of countries or organization in the Euro-Atlantic area was entitled to seek dominance. However, these promises were reneged on with the admission of Eastern European countries and the Baltic States into NATO. We were told at the time that no obligations regarding the non-expansion of NATO had been set down “in writing”. After that, even the written commitments adopted at the OSCE ceased to be taken into account, in this case because, as it was argued, they were political rather than legal. And as was made clear to the Russian side during the negotiations with the United States and NATO in 2021, legally binding security guarantees can only be obtained by being a member of the North Atlantic Alliance. Which is a way of saying: “Draw your own conclusions, sirs.”

As a result, we are witnessing the gravest crisis of trust towards Euro-Atlantic and European institutions, including the OSCE. The principles and parameters for ensuring security laid down at the level of the Heads of State or Government of countries in our region are no longer seen by the West as inviolable. Meanwhile, international bodies are proving powerless in the face of this new reality. That, then, is what the European “rules-based” security order looks like.

The Forum’s work under the French Chairmanship, unfortunately, corroborated the aforementioned assessments. Instead of painstaking joint work to allay mutual concerns, we witnessed the imposition of NATO’s notorious “risk management” concept, which implies the continuation of provocative activities against Russia. We also took note of the document presenting summary conclusions from the French FSC Chairmanship. In our view, it does not impose any obligations on the participating States. However, we would point out that Western States’ attempts to exploit the norms of international humanitarian law to push

through their one-sided agenda can count on no sympathy on our part. We could talk about this at length. However, we will cite just one example, namely how EU countries make a distinction between those civilians who deserve protection and those non-combatants who are “allowed” to be targeted under the pretext of a “legitimate right to self-defence”. It is utterly unacceptable to legitimize such double standards through the FSC.

We expect the Georgian Chairmanship to follow a sensible and balanced approach when organizing the series of Security Dialogues on the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security, which are to focus on the Code’s intra-State aspects and on compliance with international humanitarian law. That said, we would recommend our Georgian colleagues not to lose sight of the inter-State aspects of that document. These are currently being sacrificed to the militaristic ambitions of EU and NATO member States (which is, in fact, why, at their instigation, consideration of these aspects has become yet another taboo at the FSC). In that regard, we hope that the Chairmanship will inform the participating States in good time of the outcome of the consultations on organizing the Annual Discussion on the Implementation of the Code of Conduct in accordance with FSC Decision No. 12/11.

In closing, we should like to point out that, in the current challenging circumstances, strict compliance with the Rules of Procedure of the OSCE, including the consensus rule, and due regard and respect for the interests of all 57 participating States without exception are the only thing that can guarantee the FSC’s stability and a successful Chairmanship. It is also essential that the Forum’s politico-military mandate, as agreed on by all the participating States, be adhered to, without attention and resources being dissipated on secondary issues that are alien to the FSC’s aims and objectives. Otherwise, the Forum will remain unviable and will simply not manage to fulfil the tasks before it.

In that regard, we are counting on Georgia’s constructive efforts at the helm of the Chairmanship and wish the Chairmanship team every success. It goes without saying that the Troika of FSC Chairmanships can also count on the Russian delegation’s support when it comes to strengthening the Forum’s political and institutional foundations on the basis of due regard for the views of all 57 participating States without exception.

Thank you for your attention.