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**STATEMENT IN EXERCISE OF THE RIGHT OF REPLY BY  
THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AT THE  
1565th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

21 May 2026

**On Ukraine**

Mr. Chairperson,

I should like to speak in exercise of my right of reply. Furthermore, allow me to state from the outset that I shall wait until my next statement before commenting on the unconvincing attempts by Latvia and a number of its European counterparts to justify themselves.

Last week, the Kyiv regime and its leader continued to provoke Russia by conducting targeted strikes on civilian infrastructure in various Russian towns and cities. However, the goals pursued were the same as always. On the one hand, to create the illusion among its Western sponsors that Ukraine is capable of fighting for a long time yet, and ideally to also compel Russia to respond firmly, which could then be used to wheedle further money and weapons out of them. On the other hand, to divert attention from the corruption scandals engulfing Ukraine's leadership, scandals in which we find the name "Zelensky" writ large, though no one yet dares to say it out loud.

Having been too scared to attack Moscow during the Victory Day parade on 9 May, the regime in Kyiv nevertheless vented its hatred last week in a massive attack on the Russian capital and its environs. At least a hundred combat drones were launched against civilian objects. Built-up residential areas were also targeted in these terrorist strikes. Three people were killed as a result and a further 16 injured.

A woman was killed in a strike on a house in Khimki, while two men lost their lives when a residential building was set ablaze in the village of Pogorelki, in the Mytishchinsky municipal district. Twelve people sustained shrapnel injuries in the area of the Moscow Oil Refinery in the Kapotnya district, most of them construction workers who were on-site.

The city of Ryazan had previously been subjected to a similarly cynical and inhumane attack, with residential areas coming under fire. As a result, two high-rise buildings were damaged and four people lost their lives, including a child. Twenty-eight people sustained injuries of varying degrees of severity, including four children. At least 99 drones were shot down in total over the region.

All in all, Ukrainian artillery, missile and drone attacks claimed 234 civilian casualties over the past week: 203 people were injured, including 18 minors, and 31 people were killed, including two minors.

The Ukrainian armed forces fired more than 3,600 munitions at civilian objects on Russian territory over the past seven days. The overwhelming majority of the weapons being used by the Ukrainian armed forces are manufactured and supplied by the Western accomplices in the Kyiv regime's crimes.

Attacks by Ukrainian combat drones were the most frequent cause of death or injury among the civilian population. Over the past seven days, raids by Ukrainian unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) claimed 224 civilian casualties, accounting for 95 per cent of the total number of such casualties.

The Belgorod region continues to be the area most frequently subjected to attacks, primarily involving the use of drones. Between 100 and 120 drones attack that region every day. Over the past week, the Ukrainian death squads' strikes left 42 civilians injured and five people dead. In the city of Belgorod itself, drones systematically targeted residential areas. Nine civilians, including a three-year-old girl, were injured when an apartment building was hit.

The Ukrainian "fighters", disregarding the norms and principles of international humanitarian law and exploiting the selective blindness of our Western colleagues, are deliberately launching strikes against medical vehicles and facilities. A team of doctors were attacked by a drone in a follow-up strike in the village of Oktyabrsky in the Belgorod region when they arrived at the scene to treat an 18-year-old youth who had been injured. Three ambulance workers were injured as a result of the attack. Over in the Zaporozhye region, windows were damaged in an outpatient clinic of the central district hospital in the city of Tokmak.

Educational institutions are also regularly at the receiving end of deliberate attacks by Zelenskyy's formations. In the city of Vasilyevka in the Zaporozhye region, a targeted UAV strike was conducted against a school building. A Ukrainian drone was deliberately flown towards the building and it crashed directly into the window frame of a classroom. It was by sheer luck alone that there were no tragic consequences.

The Ukrainian armed forces are carrying out remote mining of civilian objects and places that are frequently visited by people. A teenage boy, aged 16, was killed by the detonation of an explosive device in Shakhtyorsk in the Donetsk People's Republic (DPR). A three-year-old girl and a 12-year-old boy were injured in Mariupol. A 14-year-old boy lost a foot when a mine exploded in the village of Krasny Yar in the Lugansk People's Republic.

At least 900 munitions were fired at civilian objects in the Kherson region over the past seven days. In the city of Aleshki, a Ukrainian drone operator dropped a munition directly on a group of municipal workers who were carrying out street maintenance. This targeted strike claimed the life of a woman and left five men maimed.

The Kyiv regime has contrived to get the situation around the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant (NPP) to heat up again. In the early hours of 19 May, the Ukrainian armed forces launched yet another barrage attack using drones against critical infrastructure facilities at the Zaporizhzhia NPP. Kamikaze drones systematically attacked the territory of the plant, including the areas where the reactor units are located. Thanks to the concerted efforts of Russian air defence forces and the plant's security personnel, it proved possible to prevent direct hits on the nuclear reactors; however, ancillary infrastructure was damaged. In addition to drone attacks, there have been instances of artillery fire directed at the Zaporizhzhia NPP. The situation at the plant remains consistently tense. The experts at the International Atomic Energy Agency have been officially notified of these incidents. Let me be clear: through its actions last week, the Zelenskyy regime brought Europe closer to the brink of a nuclear disaster that is likely to have even more devastating consequences than the Chernobyl accident. Is anyone in Europe trying to stop that regime? No.

What is more, it is allowed to get away with all provocations; it meets with nothing but encouragement and incitement over in Europe, so why on earth should it have second thoughts and put an end to its reckless behaviour?

Furthermore, a pattern we have observed on numerous occasions is once again evident: the worse the front-line situation for the Ukrainian army is, the more intensively the Ukrainian armed forces fire at civilian objects on Russian territory. And there is nothing for Zelenskyy to boast about on that score – as we have been warning, given that the Kyiv regime and a number of its sponsors have shown so little interest in seeking a long-term and sustainable diplomatic solution to the Ukrainian crisis, Russian units have continued to advance along the entire front line, driving the Ukrainian armed forces out of well-fortified positions. Over the past few days alone, the settlements of Kutkovka and Borovaya have been liberated, while fighting is under way to liberate Novy Mir, Druzhelyubovka and Cherneshchina. In the DPR, Russian troops have by now gained control of 85 per cent of the territory of Krasny Liman, and assault units are continuing to fight street by street to fully liberate this strategically important city. On the Gulyaypole front, our troops are advancing from Charivnoye towards Gulyaypole; a settlement was liberated that serves as an important bridgehead on the approaches to Orekhov. Fighting continues for control of Vasilevka, Mirnoye and Rodinskoye, and combat operations are also under way in the industrial zone of the city of Konstantinovka. In the Krasny Liman and Seversk sectors, our units are advancing through wooded areas and on the approaches to Rai-Aleksandrovka. On the Sumy front, successes have been recorded in Andreyevka, while fighting continues for control of Kondratovka. The pace of the Russian army's spring-summer offensive is picking up, and the real problems for the Ukrainian armed forces are only just beginning.

Judging by his statements, Zelenskyy does not want to hear anything about these developments, or he is not being briefed on them. Consequently, according to the Ukrainian “world view”, everything is going well for the Ukrainian armed forces, while everything is going badly in Russia. By now a clear majority of the Ukrainian population begs to differ, having witnessed how the “people-catchers” are abducting men from the streets, hospital wards and public transport, beating them up and holding them in inhumane conditions, with those who survive being packed off without any training to the front line, where they face a certain death.

Over the past two weeks alone, Ukrainian media outlets and human rights organizations have reported dozens of cases of citizens being carried off by force. In Odessa, military enlistment officers burst into a private clinic and removed three patients from the premises, including a man with a spinal fracture. In Lviv, the “people-catchers” carried out a round-up at the railway station, blocking the exits and checking the documents of all men of conscription age. Those who tried to refuse were beaten up and forcibly shoved into buses. In Kyiv, military enlistment officers stormed a shopping centre and carried out raids across the individual establishments, detaining shop assistants and customers.

Against this backdrop, the antagonism between the public and these “people-catchers”, whom Ukrainians contemptuously refer to as *politsai* (collaborators working as police thugs), has reached unprecedented levels; it is no longer just stones and sticks that are being used, but firearms as well. Many are already openly describing what is going on as a veritable civil war, one provoked within Ukrainian society by the Kyiv regime.

Incidentally, yesterday Ukrainians marked with sadness the seventh anniversary of Zelenskyy's inauguration and, by extension, the second anniversary of his usurpation of power in that country. The relevant statistics one may cite are quite simply shocking. Not a single one of his election campaign promises has been fulfilled – instead of peace with Russia, he triggered a fratricidal war; he divided society

through persecution of the Russian language; he wrecked the economy and became completely dependent on the West.

As a result, food prices have risen by 240 per cent on average, while housing and utility costs have increased by 160 per cent. It is hardly surprising that the country's population, which stood at almost 52 million when Ukraine gained independence, has halved since 2019, dropping from 41 million to 21 million. Nor is it surprising that, to take the place of the Ukrainian men being thrown into the senseless meat grinder, migrants from South Asian countries are increasingly being brought into the country, their numbers having already reached 450,000. The country is mired in corruption, which is being shielded at the very top. But the Ukrainians cannot change anything, as they have been stripped of their right to vote and indeed of any rights whatsoever. Is this the Ukraine that the 73 per cent of voters who cast their ballot for Zelenskyy in 2019 were dreaming of?

The answer is obvious to everyone except Zelenskyy and his clique; only they think things are going well in Ukraine. Distinguished colleagues, if you prefer to continue basking in the "warm glow of self-deception" together with him, we cannot stop you. However, if and when you do ultimately see the light, there may well be nothing left of Ukraine at the rate things are going. Although perhaps that is precisely what your true mission consists in.

Thank you for your attention.