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Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY
MR. DMITRY POLYANSKIY, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1573rd MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

16 July 2026

On the United Kingdom's hybrid activities to destabilize the OSCE area

Mr. Chairperson,

It is bizarre to hear a British representative making lengthy accusations against Russia regarding “hybrid threats”. It seems as though the United Kingdom is trying to cast itself in the role of a champion of stability. However, behind this rhetoric lie actions that may far more fittingly be characterized as destabilizing and as posing hybrid threats to the entire European continent. The current policies emanating from the foggy shores of Albion are increasingly coming to look like a revisiting of the darkest chapters of that country's history, when the British Empire sought to dictate the rules of the game to the rest of the world.

We have repeatedly highlighted the United Kingdom's constant efforts to bring about an escalation of the Ukrainian crisis. The most striking episode was the derailment of the Istanbul negotiation process in 2022. We would remind you that, in the spring of 2022, the Russian and Ukrainian delegations in Istanbul were closer than ever to signing a peace agreement that could have halted the bloodshed and preserved Ukraine's neutral status. However, it was a visit by British Prime Minister Boris Johnson and his categorical instructions to the Kyiv regime to “just fight” that scuppered that historic opportunity for peace, which had been agreed on by the parties. In order to ensure the necessary media backdrop for derailing the talks between Russia and Ukraine, the British intelligence services had a hand in the false-flag operation mounted in Bucha in April 2022. We may well ask in whose interests the authorities in London were acting at the time: those of European security or the interests of British military-industrial corporations? How can one fail to recall what UK Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said about the British having turned Ukraine into a “battle lab” for the testing of Western weapons?

The United Kingdom is nowadays one of the chief sponsors of the Kyiv regime's war machine, supplying it with long-range weapons that are being used to terrorize Russian regions. In particular, the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation has on several occasions established the use of British-made Storm Shadow missiles by the Kyiv regime – there is irrefutable evidence in the form of fragments of such missiles found at impact sites. This is not merely “military aid” – it is complicity in aggressive actions against our country. For instance, in March 2026 there was yet another strike on the Bryansk region conducted using these very missiles.

We have repeatedly stated that strikes deep into Russian territory are impossible without high-precision targeting and data from satellites operated by NATO countries – this turns the United Kingdom into a party to the conflict.

Britain continues to take destructive actions against our country in the field of information and communication technologies. On 13 July 2026, the UK Government once again expanded its anti-Russian sanctions lists. We regard these moves as a continuation of the policy aimed at the “strategic defeat” of our country and reserve the right to respond appropriately.

The United Kingdom is, in effect, legitimizing and supporting the activities of Ukrainian hacker groups and telephone scammers, using them for its own geopolitical purposes. It is not only turning a blind eye to cyberattacks originating from Ukrainian territory, but is also, according to the information available, co-ordinating their actions as part of the hybrid warfare against Russia. It is telling that the UK sanctions are directed exclusively against Russia, whereas cybercriminal groups operating out of Ukraine remain unpunished. This Jesuitical approach is denting multilateral co-operation in the fight against cybercrime and effectively playing into the hands of Internet fraudsters.

Against this backdrop, Anne Keast-Butler, the Director of the Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ), a UK agency dealing with cybersecurity and signals intelligence, has publicly announced the development of an AI-powered “cybershield” system to deter Russia, describing our country as an “unstoppable force”. Such rhetoric – where the United Kingdom attempts to portray itself as a victim while simultaneously building up its offensive capabilities in the cybersphere – is hypocritical and does not reflect the true state of affairs.

We should like to focus in particular on a practice which we regard as nothing less than a return to the customs of privateering – that is, piracy sanctioned by the Crown. We are talking about the so-called “shadow fleet”. Using this term which has no legitimate basis in international maritime law, the United Kingdom has imposed sanctions on more than 500 ships, claiming the right to detain and inspect them by force in its waters, including the English Channel. Prime Minister Keir Starmer has openly stated his willingness to use military force to intercept civilian vessels solely on the grounds that they may be carrying goods linked to Russia. This is directly undermining the principles of freedom of navigation enshrined in international maritime law. Behind these actions lies the United Kingdom’s desire to unlawfully take charge of goods that do not belong to it and to block trade routes under the spurious pretext of combating “war financing”. We would remind you that such decisions have already led to piracy in all but name. In particular, a tanker sailing from Ust-Luga was detained, and criminal proceedings have been instituted against its crew.

And it is no secret that, under the guise of “combating the shadow fleet”, targeted measures are in effect being taken to eliminate competitors in the energy sector. Unilateral sanctions against energy companies in rival countries, the sabotaging of critical cross-border infrastructure and other unlawful actions fit into this pattern. This is leading to the disruption of energy supply chains, the erosion of contractual obligations, a rise in the cost of living, and increased global and regional instability. It is ultimately causing ordinary people to suffer who, once they have gone through the appropriate brainwashing, are more willing to become cannon fodder. Although, of course, this does not refer to the British; they are in the habit of operating surreptitiously and using others as a cat’s paw.

In view of all that has been said, we call upon the United Kingdom to abstain from political grandstanding and, rather than accusing Russia of hybrid threats, to take a closer look in the mirror. Britain itself is waging a large-scale, multi-pronged hybrid war against Russia – which is why the authorities in

London have no moral right to accuse our country. Responsibility for destabilizing the situation in Europe lies with those who are stirring up confrontation, supplying lethal weapons to the Kyiv regime and using extralegal methods to exert pressure on international commerce and communications.

Thank you for your attention.