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**STATEMENT BY
MR. DMITRY POLYANSKIY, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1574th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

23 July 2026

On the ongoing hybrid war waged by NATO and the European Union against Russia

Mr. Chairperson,

I shall read out an abridged version of our statement; the full version will be distributed by us after the meeting.

Colleagues, we have already noted in one of our recent statements that, by expressing solidarity with the current Ukrainian authorities (including during the visit to Kyiv I mentioned in my previous statement), you are signing up to the all too familiar criminally minded “default settings” of the Kyiv regime, which are precisely what triggered the Ukrainian crisis that entered a hot phase in 2022. Or, put differently, you are confirming that you do not wish to address the root causes of the crisis, thereby brushing aside the prospects for peace, because you know full well that, unless these problems are solved and the threats emanating from Ukraine are eliminated, our special military operation will not come to an end.

In contradistinction to a peaceful scenario, from which our entire continent, including Ukraine, would benefit, you are taking an openly Russophobic approach and promoting schemes which, in one way or another, presuppose a strategic defeat being inflicted on Russia. The “war party” in the West is acting in the open, cynically, and it is doing so more aggressively with each passing day. Even leading Western media outlets cannot fail to notice this.

Thus, in the past seven days alone, the British newspaper *The Times* reported on the accelerated militarization of NATO’s eastern flank and the concentration of forces along Russia’s borders. The German newspaper *Handelsblatt* informed its readers about a two-year aid package for the Kyiv regime to the tune of 140 billion euros. Meanwhile, *Der Spiegel*, one of Germany’s most influential magazines, notes that NATO is seriously discussing preparations for a conflict with Russia, mentioning how the Alliance’s Secretary General is calling upon member countries to put their economies on a war footing.

The practical steps taken by our NATO neighbours likewise leave no doubt as to their true intentions. In June, the “Ramstein Flag 2026” exercise took place. Unprecedented in scale, it involved 19 countries, including Finland and Norway, which both share a border with Russia. As noted by analysts, the nature of that exercise “completely rules out any defensive interpretation”, involving as it did the rehearsal

of a full-blown aerial offensive. The stated pace of air operations was hundreds of aircraft sorties per day, which is characteristic of an offensive configuration when planning combat operations.

From 30 June to 30 July, the “Sea Breeze 2026” exercise is taking place in the Black Sea under the auspices of NATO. A network of cutting-edge maintenance and repair hubs for military equipment is being set up along our borders, designed to critically shorten the logistical “tail” in the event of hostilities. These are not defensive measures at all, but preparations for an offensive, for a high-intensity conflict – even your own experts confirm this.

Against this backdrop, the accelerated financing of the Kyiv regime continues.

First, the Council of the European Union agreed to grant a loan worth 90 billion euros to Ukraine for the 2026–2027 period. Of this amount, 60 billion euros are intended exclusively to meet military needs. On 25 June, the first tranche of macrofinancial aid – 3.2 billion euros – was transferred. On 30 June, a further 3.9 billion euros were released for the procurement of drones. On 15 July, 1 billion euros were additionally disbursed, again to be spent on drones. And this does not even take into account the commitments agreed on at the NATO summit in Ankara, where European countries and Canada pledged 70 billion euros to Ukraine for 2026 and at least the same amount again for 2027. All in all, hundreds of billions of euros earmarked for war.

Now that the United States of America has largely withdrawn its funding for Ukraine, Europe is confirming that it is prepared to support the “anti-Russia project” on its own and making a conscious choice in favour of escalation and war with our country.

And this is only the tip of the iceberg. European countries are not merely bankrolling the Kyiv regime – they are systematically reorienting their economies towards a war footing, thereby transforming the continent into one big military-industrial arsenal for waging war against Russia.

Germany, which has effectively become the main industrial base for the Ukrainian military-industrial complex, issued export licences for military goods worth a record 13.87 billion euros in the first half of 2026 alone. The principal recipient of German weapons is Ukraine, with exports to the tune of around 2.52 billion euros having been approved for that country. The Rheinmetall Group has opened a new plant in Unterlüß and begun supplying state-of-the-art RH1412 artillery shells of 155 mm calibre manufactured there. Ukraine and Germany are also setting up more than ten joint ventures in the defence sector for the production of drones, long-range weapons and air defence systems.

France is going even further. President Macron has announced that Ukraine will be granted licences to manufacture SCALP cruise missiles, Aster 30 surface-to-air missiles for the SAMP/T air defence system, and AASM Hammer precision-guided aerial bombs. Ukraine has also ordered 16 Rafale fighter jets, complete with a full weapons package. In essence, under the guise of licensed production, France will be transferring ready-made SCALP missiles to Ukraine. And this is yet more evidence of France’s direct involvement in the conflict.

The United Kingdom has begun delivering the first 150 artillery barrels of 105 and 155 mm calibre under a contract worth 61 million pounds sterling. This is the first batch of this type of weaponry to have been manufactured in the United Kingdom in the last 20 years.

The European Commission and Ukraine have signed an agreement on a strategic defence industrial partnership, under which up to 10 billion euros from the EU loan will be channelled towards the joint production of drones and missiles. In other words, Europe is not just supplying weapons – it is incorporating

Ukraine into its own military-industrial supply chains, making that country an integral part of its war machine.

All these actions of yours are clear to us and we harbour no illusions as to the true intentions of a number of European governments. However, one obvious question remains unanswered: who gave the European elites a mandate to drag the peoples of Europe into a war with Russia? After all, opinion polls conducted by prominent media outlets reveal completely different sentiments among ordinary Europeans. According to a YouGov survey published by *The Guardian*, Europeans' willingness to support Ukraine "all the way to victory" has sharply declined, namely by 14 percentage points in the United Kingdom, with similar trends observed in Sweden and Denmark. In Germany, opinion poll findings indicate that a significant proportion of the population is in favour of reducing military aid and negotiating with Russia. In Bulgaria, which is also a NATO member, 66 per cent of the population oppose funding arms purchases for Ukraine.

At least a third of Europeans, according to surveys, are not prepared to take up arms, and in Italy that share is nearly 80 per cent. Does this not suggest that the political elites are provoking a conflict while ignoring the will of their own populations?

It is noteworthy that even European leaders themselves are forced to acknowledge this divergence. On 20 July, Croatian President Zoran Milanović stated that the ruling elites in the West were exploiting the public's indifference in order to advance their military agenda. He also emphasized that "Russia poses no threat to the territory [or] security" of the European Union, but that certain forces were attempting to provoke a conflict with Russia.

It is also evident that the emphasis on military preparations is undermining any diplomatic efforts. The presentation of ultimatums to Russia, of course, does not fall into the category of such efforts. Instead of constructing a new security architecture based on the principles of mutual respect and consideration for each other's legitimate interests, Europe, by shielding the Kyiv regime and building up its own military capabilities, is becoming ever more deeply entangled in the logic of military confrontation. Any calls within EU countries to consider an alternative to this suicidal course are immediately labelled as "pro-Russian propaganda".

Colleagues, in light of the foregoing, there can be no doubt that a direct armed conflict between Europe and Russia is merely a matter of time. Through your statements, including those made in this room, you constantly confirm this and leave us with no choice but to get ready to neutralize the threats you are creating. And the longer diplomacy remains hostage to your Russophobic obsession, the fewer the chances left that we will be able to step back from the brink.

Thank you for your attention.