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**STATEMENT BY
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RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS ON MILITARY
SECURITY AND ARMS CONTROL, AT THE 1146th PLENARY MEETING OF
THE OSCE FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION**

23 September 2026

Agenda item: Security Dialogue

**Subject: Small arms and light weapons and stockpiles of conventional ammunition –
assistance mechanism**

Mr. Chairperson,

We note that, after a four-year hiatus, the UK Chairmanship has organized a meeting dedicated to the mechanism for providing assistance with the management of small arms and light weapons (SALW) and stockpiles of conventional ammunition (SCA). We believe that today's discussion contributes to the implementation of the tasking from the 2016 OSCE Ministerial Council meeting in Hamburg (MC/DOC/3/16) by enabling us to explore opportunities for advancing project activities and also to examine the existing objective obstacles in this field.

It is worth recalling that the foundations for work on developing and promoting the implementation of measures governing the storage, circulation and destruction of SALW and SCA, including rocket fuel components, were laid down as far back as 1996, with the OSCE Framework for Arms Control. Over many years, a range of issues related to the implementation and enhancement of the SALW- and SCA-related norms adopted within the framework of our Organization have continued to be of relevance, as has practical assistance with the management of stockpiles of SALW and conventional ammunition. This is borne out not only by the numerous OSCE projects that have been implemented, but also by a good dozen thematic decisions and declarations adopted by the Ministerial Council that direct the participating States to co-operate in this area. However, as recent experience has shown, some delegations believe that these commitments can be set aside if political considerations take precedence at some point. Consequently, in recent years, a whole range of matters relating to the implementation of the OSCE Document on SALW (2000) and the OSCE Document on SCA (2003) have effectively been excluded from the work of the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC). As we see it, this has inevitably led to a weakening of the Organization's capacity in this area.

Issues pertaining to the control of SALW and their ammunition are prioritized in the Russian Federation. We pay particular attention to the safe and secure storage of weapons stockpiles, control of the circulation of weapons, and the timely disposal of obsolete and surplus armaments. Our country has strict

regulations in place governing the circulation of SALW and ammunition. They fully comply with the requirements of international instruments, including the OSCE Documents on SALW and SCA. We also continue to acknowledge the importance of co-ordinated international efforts aimed at tackling the problem of illicit trafficking in SALW, with the central role of the United Nations to be preserved.

In this regard, we consider it important to promote measures designed to reduce the risk of weapons moving from the licit to the illicit trade, including: imposing a universal ban on the transfer of all types of SALW to entities not authorized by the governments of recipient States; ensuring strict regulation and direct control by States in the territory under their jurisdiction over brokering (intermediary) activities related to the export of weapons and setting a maximum limit on the number of such brokers; introducing a ban on the re-export or subsequent transfers of imported SALW without the written consent of the State that originally exported them; and preventing the production of SALW under expired licences or without a licence from the country that owns the technology for their production, which includes putting a stop to the practice whereby weapons produced under licence undergo slight modification without the developer's consent and are exported as proprietary designs.

We attach great importance to international co-operation in the disposal of surplus and obsolete types of SALW and ammunition. We are actively co-operating in these areas with our partners from the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the Commonwealth of Independent States. We regularly hold inter-agency workshops and conduct information exchanges and experience-sharing activities. From 2004 onwards, Russian military experts were until quite recently involved on numerous occasions in the execution of OSCE projects aimed at supporting States in training national personnel, establishing record-keeping and reporting systems for small arms, and so on. Together with foreign specialists, we successfully implemented projects in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan.

Upon request, we could consider the possibility of providing expert assistance on all aspects of SALW control throughout the life cycle of such weapons, and we could also share our experience in establishing an effective regulatory and legal framework in this field.

Mr. Chairperson,

Mention has been made today of the emergence of challenges and threats in the OSCE's area of responsibility owing to an increase in the illicit proliferation of SALW and their ammunition. "Colour revolutions", during which control over State arsenals is lost, are one of the principal sources of the influx of SALW into illicit circulation. Significantly, the proliferation of weapons in such cases is not limited to the national territory of the State going through a political crisis – there is a spillover into neighbouring countries and further afield. Libya, Syria and some North African countries are a case in point in this regard.

A similar situation has arisen in Ukraine. We are obliged to remind you that, back in 2014, as the political crisis escalated, radical elements carried off small arms and other types of weapons from depots belonging to units of the Ukrainian armed forces and the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine. Proper weapons control disappeared during the coup d'état. The programme that was subsequently announced for the collection of weapons from the population failed to achieve its main objective of completely removing SALW from illicit circulation.

Such illicit circulation is nowadays fuelled primarily by weapons delivered to the Kyiv regime by Western OSCE participating States. In the context of the current discussion, it is extremely important to note that these deliveries are in breach of the CSCE Principles Governing Conventional Arms Transfers (1993) and the OSCE Document on SALW (2000). Both documents contain commitments whereby the participating States are called upon to avoid arms transfers that would be likely to: be used for the violation

or suppression of human rights and fundamental freedoms; threaten the national security of other States; prolong or aggravate an existing armed conflict; introduce destabilizing military capabilities into a region; be diverted within the recipient country or re-exported for purposes contrary to the aims of these documents; support or encourage terrorism; or be used for the purpose of repression.

Additionally, the OSCE Principles for Export Controls of Man-Portable Air Defence Systems (MANPADS) (2004; updated in 2008 through an FSC decision) stipulate that, when making decisions regarding the export of such systems, participating States must take into account: potential for diversion or misuse in the recipient country; the recipient government's ability and willingness to protect against unauthorized re-transfers, loss, theft and diversion; and the adequacy and effectiveness of the physical security arrangements of the recipient government.

Since 2014, the provisions in question have significantly restricted the scope for weapons and military equipment to be supplied to Ukraine. That is why, for many years now, the West has been hypocritically trying to pretend that these provisions allegedly have no bearing on the actual situation in and around that country.

As a result, the illicit trafficking of Western weaponry and military equipment in Ukraine has become widespread and is now entirely controlled by Ukrainian and international organized criminal groups operating under the protection of government officials, the commanders of Ukraine's armed formations and the upper echelons of the national intelligence services. According to estimates by the law enforcement agencies of EU countries, the illegal trafficking of weapons from Ukrainian territory increased by 96 per cent in 2025. The Polish National Police note that a total of around 3,300 contraband weapons were seized in Poland in 2025, and that Ukrainians were often the defendants in the relevant criminal cases. In this connection, the Polish authorities have announced the launch of the "Trident" project, which is aimed at combating the illegal import of military goods from Ukrainian territory. And this is just one example of many.

Weaponry and military equipment are being transported by sea from Ukraine to Middle Eastern and African countries via the port infrastructure of the Odessa region, including the commercial seaport of Izmail and the Orlivka-Isaccea ferry complex. Contraband items have already been detected in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Niger, Somalia and Sudan. According to reports from Mali and Burkina Faso, Western-made small arms and anti-tank missile systems previously supplied to the Ukrainian armed forces have been spotted during armed clashes in the Sahelo-Saharan subregion. Incidentally, I should point out that by knocking out Ukraine's port infrastructure, which is being used for arms deliveries, we are also stemming the flow of arms in the other direction, including to the countries I have mentioned.

It is evident that, as a result of the West and the Kyiv regime disregarding fundamental OSCE principles on conventional arms transfers in order to pursue their political and military-industrial objectives, Ukraine has, in effect, become one of the leading hubs of the international black market for weapons, thereby threatening the security not only of the participating States of our Organization, but also that of countries on other continents.

From an objective point of view, this is precisely what is undermining the efforts undertaken as part of OSCE project activities in that country – the enormous sums provided by donors are thus essentially being squandered. While claiming that it is necessary to prevent destabilizing accumulations of conventional weapons in Ukraine, Western countries are in fact contributing to such build-ups. Moreover, they have blocked meaningful dialogue at the OSCE on measures to prevent the illicit trafficking of arms and

ammunition. As for the provisions of the OSCE Documents on SALW and SCA, which constitute the backdrop for our discussion today, those have simply been forgotten by Western participating States.

In closing, we wish to emphasize that we support the main thrust of the discussion, namely that the OSCE's efforts to prevent the uncontrolled spread of SALW and SCA are contributing to the strengthening of stability and should be continued. However, achieving tangible results in this area is only possible if there is a return to co-operation within the format of 57 participating States and to compliance with the spirit and the letter of the entire cluster of relevant OSCE politico-military commitments.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.