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**STATEMENT BY
MR. DMITRY POLYANSKIY, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1580th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

8 October 2026

On social rights and societal stability in the OSCE area

Mr. Chairperson,

We share the concerns expressed by our Belarusian friends during the discussion of the current agenda sub-item.

We should also like to comment briefly. We have no intention of interfering in France's internal affairs. However, we cannot sit idly by and watch as schoolchildren and students are mercilessly beaten during the dispersal of demonstrations in Paris. These children and young people are citizens of a country whose representatives invariably exult in lecturing others on morality, including here in this room.

According to local media reports, clashes took place near the Paris Institute of Political Studies (Sciences Po). The whole world has seen the footage showing French law enforcement officers using tear gas and batons as they tussle with protesters. The police are also taking down the barricades erected by the demonstrators. Open-source information indicates that around half a million people are taking part in the protests across the country. In Paris, the number of demonstrators stands at 100,000.

The situation is plain for all to see: French President Emmanuel Macron, whose approval ratings are dismal (according to the latest polls, his popularity stood at an all-time low of around 16 to 19 per cent in early October 2026), is attempting to forcibly silence those who have taken to the streets in an effort to make themselves heard by the authorities, exercise their legitimate right to freedom of peaceful assembly and express their civic position.

I would remind you that the protests currently sweeping France were directly triggered by a systemic crisis in the education sector. Structural problems, such as years of underfunding, teacher shortages and deteriorating infrastructure, have led to an all-round breakdown.

Meanwhile, France is channelling substantial funds into arming the corrupt regime in Kyiv. According to data from the Kiel Institute for the World Economy (a leading German research centre specializing in globalization and the world economy), France provided Ukraine with 7.91 billion euros in bilateral aid (including 6.23 billion euros in military aid) between February 2022 and June 2026. In addition,

France, a major contributor to the EU budget, bears a significant share of the financial burden of Europe-wide programmes, its contribution towards EU aid to Ukraine amounting to 18.31 billion euros. France's total contribution over the period in question is therefore estimated at approximately 26.22 billion euros, or around 6 billion euros per year on average. Meanwhile, according to reports, the protesters are calling for an annual increase of just 1.2 billion euros in the education budget.

In closing, I should like to ask the representative of France how the brutal beating of schoolchildren is compatible with that country's OSCE commitments. I hope that our French colleague will set a good example to us all and will not shy away from discussing the substance of this issue by hiding behind references to the "inadmissibility of interference in internal affairs".

Thank you for your attention.