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

Mr. Chairperson,

A notable event of the past week was the European Council summit. The conclusions from the summit made it clear that the European Union is deliberately seeking to further drag out the conflict in Ukraine and to prepare for war with Russia.

Having reiterated its commitment to its "2030 defence readiness objective", the European Council welcomed the release of 6.6 billion euros under the so-called European Peace Facility for Ukraine, approved pan-European defence projects and called for the acceleration of work on the Action Plan on Drone and Counter-Drone Security and the "Eastern Flank Watch" project. Please note the name of the instrument used to pay for weapons: the "peace facility". Orwell, as they say, would be turning in his grave! Also included in the summit's conclusions were the extension of the EU assistance mission to train Ukrainian military personnel and the adoption of a regulation on "rapid defence innovation". The focus of these decisions is not diplomacy, but rather preparing for, supplying and financing war. I should like to ask our European colleagues: what sort of peace are you building if your entire political outlook is limited to the year 2030 and "defence readiness"?

Instead of engaging in dialogue with our country about a system of equal and indivisible security that would satisfy all European States, the European Union is prepared to discuss only new sanctions. How can one talk of a "European peace plan" when the only tool the authorities in Brussels recognize when it comes to Russia is new threats, sanctions and ultimatums?

I should like to draw your attention to the figures provided by the European Council itself. Twenty-two packages of so-called sanctions have been adopted since February 2022. This constitutes a curtailment of the rights of thousands of natural persons and legal entities, bans on entire industries and restrictions on the energy, finance, transport and technology sectors. Each new package is declared to be "the largest ever".

This naturally raises a question for my European colleagues: have these sanction packages brought us any closer to peace? Have they addressed even a single root cause of the Ukrainian crisis? Russia's

economy has not collapsed, as the architects of the sanctions promised, but has adapted and is growing quite successfully. The Russian military-industrial complex has not been brought to a halt; on the contrary, it is actively ramping up production of state-of-the-art weapons systems, a fact that Europe has grudgingly been forced to acknowledge.

Instead, the sanctions have become a tool for the self-destruction of the European economy, which suffered a blow from which it has still not recovered. Record-high inflation, rising energy prices, deindustrialization, declining competitiveness, and the outflow of capital and manufacturing. European taxpayers are ultimately footing the bill for a sanctions campaign that is hitting the European Union itself hardest of all. Restrictions on energy products, financial transactions and technology transfers have backfired on European companies and households.

According to European Commission chief von der Leyen, Ukraine's funding shortfall for 2027 stands at 70 billion euros. This is in addition to the 90 billion euro loan for 2026–2027, of which, as Chancellor Merz has acknowledged, around 60 billion euros is earmarked for defence procurement – and this, he says, "will not be sufficient". According to Ukrainian media reports, Zelenskyy himself has estimated the cost of the war next year at 155 billion euros. In Europe itself, they have already been forced to acknowledge that, in order to satisfy the Kyiv regime's growing demands, they will have to cut their own spending even further, including spending on social needs.

At the same time, no one on the old continent has been able to explain over the years why European taxpayers are paying more and more to prolong a war that could easily have been avoided had the authorities in Brussels taken Russia's legitimate security concerns into account. As a result, Europeans are now raising these questions on the streets and at the polls, much to the horror of Europe's Russophobic elites. To put all this down to "the hand of Moscow" – as certain particularly gifted politicians have already begun to do – is rather problematic, given that the moral bankruptcy of the leaders of a number of European States is all too obvious.

That said, one must still make allowances for what psychiatrists refer to as the "October slide". For instance, Ms. von der Leyen claims that Russia is behind the migration crisis in Ceuta and Melilla, the French media claim that the unrest in France was co-ordinated via the MAX messaging app – which, I might add, is not installed on most mobile phones in Europe – while the German Chancellor has stated that his biggest concern is not the state of his country's economy, but "the impact of Russia on our society and how they are succeeding in destabilizing our societies". There is, of course, no evidence for any of this, but that is not really a problem, especially since Mr. Rutte, as we all remember, called for everything to be blamed on Russia even in the absence of such evidence. But even that is not working out very well – for example, just a few days ago in northern Lithuania, a civilian vehicle was damaged by a Ukrainian drone. Everything points to the fact that it flew in from Poland; it is also hard to explain its crashing by attributing it to the actions of Russian electronic warfare stations – Russia is hundreds of kilometres away from that location. Whichever way you look at it, it is very difficult to defend the Kyiv regime in such circumstances!

Incidentally, I cannot help but ask my European colleagues another obvious question: what was a Ukrainian drone doing so deep inside Lithuania, and why did it fly in from Poland? Especially given that, around that time, there was a massive drone attack by the Kyiv regime on St. Petersburg, which I mentioned in my previous statement. Could this be one of those "stray" Ukrainian drones that were attempting to bypass Russian air defences by flying in from NATO territory? We have already discussed such incidents in this room and pointed out that these actions by the Kyiv regime – whether taken independently or in co-ordination with Poland and the Baltic States – are pushing Russia and NATO towards a direct military confrontation. Do you enjoy playing with fire and putting your citizens' lives at risk? Frankly, it is hard to come up with any other explanation.

At the same time, the provocative rhetoric coming from Europe, unfortunately, attests to the deliberate and co-ordinated nature of such provocations. On 19 October, German Chancellor Merz told Bloomberg that Europe was allegedly not taking the "threat from the Kremlin" seriously enough, while the Russophobic head of the European External Action Service, Kaja Kallas, described the Kyiv regime's strikes on Russian oil refineries as "a form of defence". In other words, Europe's chief diplomat, whose role is to seek ways to resolve the conflict, is publicly endorsing strikes on civilian infrastructure. We believe that for this statement alone, Ms. Kallas should be immediately awarded the Nobel Peace Prize!

Incidentally, I should like to come back to the remarks made by my esteemed Dutch colleague at our previous meeting. Let me remind you that you denied that your country's Minister of Defence had used the word "enemy" when referring to Russia. Moreover, you said that the terminology used by the Minister "reflects the assessments made by both NATO and the EU". We have found the Minister's exact words; I shall quote them in your native language: "Rusland is onze vijand" [Russia is our enemy]. Even with my limited knowledge of Dutch, I cannot think of any other way to translate this word than "enemy" – perhaps you could enlighten me? And while we are at it, perhaps your colleagues from NATO and the European Union could explain to us here in this room how these words – spoken not by just anyone, but by the Minister of Defence – reflect the position of the European Union and NATO towards Russia.

Unfortunately, in addition to this irresponsible rhetoric, we are also seeing increasing evidence that Europe's preparations for war are taking place at a systemic level. According to Politico, NATO countries intend to discuss their military requirements in the event of a conflict with Russia by the end of October.

Military exercises are being conducted at the same time. NATO's "Steadfast Noon" nuclear-deterrence exercises are taking place in Italy from 13 to 23 October, with 17 countries taking part. From 16 to 21 October, the "Neptune Strike" exercises took place in the North Atlantic and the Mediterranean, involving several aircraft carrier strike groups. In Finland, 140 km from the Russian border, the "Steadfast Duel" command post exercises have recently concluded, with up to 8,000 personnel from all 32 NATO countries taking part, while the "Mighty Hammer" exercises are due to begin on 23 October, involving some 4,000 military personnel and 120 tanks and armoured vehicles.

Subsequently, the "Northern Axe" exercises will take place from 30 November, with the participation of a further 2,500 or so military personnel. A total of eight major exercises involving military personnel from Germany, Norway, Sweden, Latvia, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom are scheduled to take place in Finland by the end of the year. According to the available information, the "coalition of the willing" will practise the deployment of troops to Ukraine in Poland in November. And after all this, they are trying to convince us that it is Russia that is threatening Europe with war? The facts actually point to the exact opposite!

So far, the European Union has managed to agree on a single strategy: to use the conflict in Ukraine to inflict the maximum possible political, economic and military damage on our country. The Russophobic European elites have staked their entire political and economic capital on this and are now trying with all their might to avoid total bankruptcy and losing face. Therefore, even as the risk of the Ukrainian crisis escalating into a major European war grows by the day, we cannot expect them to do anything now other than drag out the crisis.

We hope that our colleagues from the United States of America, who have recently stepped up their mediation efforts, understand this clearly.

In contrast to the intransigent stance of the European Union and its allies from the United Kingdom, we note the willingness of the US negotiators – Donald Trump himself and his special envoys – to discuss, in a businesslike and constructive manner, ways of resolving the conflict surrounding Ukraine and to seek appropriate practical solutions. During their meeting yesterday, Vladimir Putin and the US President's Special Envoy, Steve Witkoff, discussed in detail a plan for the possible resumption of trilateral talks involving representatives from Russia, the United States and Ukraine. The talks are tentatively scheduled for 10 November. It should be recalled that the previous attempt to move towards a trilateral format was derailed by the Kyiv regime, which deliberately opted to escalate the situation during the voting period for the elections to the Russian State Duma.

Russia is thus once again demonstrating its commitment to diplomacy and its readiness to engage in dialogue. The ball is now in the court of the Kyiv regime and its European sponsors. The coming days and weeks will show whether they are prepared to negotiate from a realistic standpoint, with an eye towards a long-term and sustainable resolution of the crisis, or whether all they are capable of doing is sabotaging others' peace initiatives.

Thank you for your attention.