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FSC.DEL/91/25/Rev.1
2 April 2025

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY
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RUSSIAN FEDERATION AT THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS ON MILITARY
SECURITY AND ARMS CONTROL, AT THE 1101st PLENARY MEETING OF
THE OSCE FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION**

19 March 2025

**Agenda item: General statements
Subject: Special military operation to demilitarize and denazify Ukraine**

Mr. Chairperson,

At the start of the year, during a conference of the European Defence Agency, the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Kaja Kallas, and the European Commissioner for Defence and Space, Andrius Kubilius, urged the EU countries to increase their military spending in order to essentially prepare for a major armed conflict of high intensity. Moreover, the second of these officials cynically said: “Every day Ukraine fights on is a day the European Union and NATO can grow stronger.” In these circumstances, a number of countries, such as Finland for example, have already decided for themselves that the chances for a peaceful settlement of the Ukrainian crisis are “extremely small”, prompting President Alexander Stubb to call for the *de facto* theft of frozen Russian assets and the intensification of military support for Ukraine. In Germany they are seriously talking about it being “advantageous” to prolong the conflict around Ukraine for “the next few years”. These pronouncements, aimed as they are at triggering a war psychosis on the continent, once again confirm that peacekeeping and EU/NATO are two incompatible things.

As the forthcoming EU summit on 20 and 21 March draws closer, it has become quite clear that the financial burden of Europe’s frenzied and reckless militarization will fall on the shoulders of none other than national governments, which, after pouring billions upon billions into the Ukrainian black hole, will have to incur new debts or cut social spending. What is more, the question is by now no longer about the NATO and EU countries being dragged into the conflict around Ukraine, but about incipient preparations for a direct confrontation between them and Russia. The corresponding plans include increasing the personnel strength of armed forces and the amount of weaponry, redeploying these eastwards, ramping up military production, developing military transport infrastructure, creating strategic stockpiles, building camps to hold prisoners of war and, by the looks of it, transforming the healthcare system so that it can operate in wartime conditions.

It is telling that European media outlets’ priming of public opinion for the most radical scenarios is being carried out at the same time as the authorities in Paris and London are floating the idea of deploying contingents from Western countries on the territory of Ukraine. Furthermore, as French President

Emmanuel Macron arrogantly asserted in an interview with the newspaper *Le Parisien*, “it is not for Russia to accept that or not.” As part of some muscle-flexing for show, he had previously already allowed himself to resort to nuclear rhetoric and threats against Russia. By the way, that is entirely in keeping with the policy of a State that did not take any action in 2014, at the height of “Euromaidan”, to ensure the implementation of the agreement between the President of Ukraine and the opposition, and that subsequently, in the course of seven years, despite being the guarantor of a peace settlement, allowed the Minsk agreements to be used to get the Kyiv regime ready for a “major war”, as former French President François Hollande would later openly admit. Even now, France is not deviating from its deeply ingrained foreign policy tactic: with one hand it wants to set up a “peacekeeping contingent”, while with the other it is giving the Kyiv regime satellite data to enable strikes against Russian civilian objects. For example, in the Kherson region on 9 March, the Ukrainian armed forces struck market stalls in the village of Velikiye Kopani with two HIMARS missiles fitted with cluster warheads so as to maximize their impact. The satellite tracking of targets was carried out from French Eutelsat satellites, while missile guidance was provided by the French CSO-3 reconnaissance satellite. Four people were killed. At least seven were injured, including a paramedic who came under fire during a second attack. An ambulance was destroyed. We know full well that, in view of the fears that Ukraine may be disconnected from the US Starlink network, the French satellite operator Eutelsat Group, which operates the Eutelsat and OneWeb satellite fleets, is exploring the possibility of expanding its satellite coverage across Ukrainian territory. Against this backdrop, the company’s shares have gone up by 80 per cent. We would be interested to learn from the French delegation whether that is what the “path to peace” is meant to look like from France’s perspective. That is, a path marked by the use of force and direct assistance in carrying out gross violations of international humanitarian law?

In connection with what has been said, we are obliged to emphasize once again that for us the stationing of units from the armed forces of other States in Ukraine under any flag whatsoever is utterly unacceptable, be it foreign contingents, military bases or so-called “peacekeeping operations” proposed by those who have altogether dropped the words “peacekeeping” and “peace” out of their vocabulary – and out of their political practice too. This would signify these countries becoming involved in direct armed conflict with the Russian Federation, something that we will respond to using all available means.

We know too well how foreign military specialists “on the ground” are helping to “bring peace closer”. In August 2024, the Ukrainian armed forces’ terrorist incursion into the Kursk region was carried out with active assistance from Western countries (as Volodymyr Zelenskyy’s adviser Mykhailo Podolyak personally admitted), extending all the way to military planning, the provision of intelligence data, equipment and weapons, and also the participation of numerous mercenaries. Today in the European capitals there is no choice but to acknowledge the complete failure of that heinous adventure. Just take a look at the headlines being run by global media outlets: “Ukraine’s Gamble in Kursk Isn’t Paying Off” (*The American Conservative*); “‘Everything is finished’: Ukrainian troops relive retreat from Kursk ... The BBC has received extensive accounts from Ukrainian troops, who recount a ‘catastrophic’ withdrawal in the face of heavy fire,” (BBC); “‘We have been had’: how the Ukrainian troops were forced to leave Russia’s Kursk region” (*Le Point*); “The defeat at Kursk is a tragic allegory for the dire situation that the country [Ukraine] now faces” (*The Telegraph*). And these are just some examples. Neither the money from NATO and EU countries, nor Western armaments, nor mercenaries have been able to help the criminal regime in Kyiv.

The armed forces of the Russian Federation are at present conducting active operations to expel the Ukrainian occupiers from the Kursk region. In late February/early March of this year, control was established over key supply routes of the Ukrainian armed forces. Furthermore, the unprecedented Operation “Potok” (“Stream”) was conducted, in which some 600 Russian soldiers infiltrated the area behind enemy lines through a gas pipeline in Sudzha, crushing the enemy’s defences once and for all. The penetration grouping is currently isolated and is being systematically destroyed. Russian units have crossed the State

border in certain areas and moved into the Sumy region, where they are continuing to liquidate the Ukrainian armed forces' reserves and expanding the security zone.

Overall, more than 86 per cent of the occupied territory of the Kursk region has been liberated in the course of these offensive operations. The enemy has lost over 67,000 military personnel – the best-prepared and highly mobile, highly motivated units of the Ukrainian armed forces and foreign mercenaries. The amount of enemy weaponry destroyed is comparable with that of several modern European armies: 7,000 items of military equipment, including more than 390 tanks, 2,780 armoured combat vehicles and over 1,000 artillery pieces and mortars. In addition, when fleeing from the Kursk region – which in some cases they even did wearing civilian clothes – the Ukrainian fighters left behind huge amounts of Western military equipment, including M1 Abrams tanks, Bradley armoured infantry fighting vehicles, Kirpi II and Bushmaster PMV armoured personnel carriers, and M777 howitzers.

But while European countries again look in puzzlement at their depleted purses and army stores, we should also like to draw attention to the fact that the financial and military resources invested to bring about the incursion into the Kursk region were essentially spent on the Kyiv regime's crimes against the civilian population of the Russian Federation.

In the liberated population centres – more than 30 of which were liberated over the past week – a trail has been left behind of destroyed residential buildings, burned-down civilian infrastructure facilities, smashed cars, and shops and bus stations swept into the maelstrom of the marauding Ukrainian armed forces. The neo-Nazis deliberately burned out entire streets using handheld flamethrowers. Farmlands, gas pipelines, boiler stations and other public facilities were mined. Engineering units of the armed forces of the Russian Federation have discovered munitions prohibited under the Geneva Convention [the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons], including PFM-1 Lepestok anti-personnel mines.

All these bestial tactics of the Ukrainian fighters are akin to the Nazis' actions during the Second World War. It is not surprising that, according to the Foreign Intelligence Service of the Russian Federation, German media outlets have been instructed by the Federal Government to prevent evidence of the Ukrainian armed forces' use of gestures and symbols associated with fascist Germany from appearing in the photographs and video material that they publish. German journalists will otherwise be held liable, even criminally liable. Hiding the truth will not work in any case, for the truth will always out.

The numerous crimes perpetrated against the civilian population in the incursion zone by Ukrainian fighters have been categorized as terrorism by the Prosecutor General's Office of the Russian Federation. Suffice it to say that in a number of liberated border villages in the Kursk region just 50 per cent of civilians survived. The enemy engaged in indiscriminate, wholesale shelling of the civilian population. Often mutilated and showing signs of torture, the bodies of those killed are being discovered in houses, cellars and churches. The diary of a deceased pensioner was found in the village of Martynovka, in which this desperate woman describes the full horror of the Ukrainian occupation. For months she hid from the Ukrainian armed forces in a barn, without food and water, sensing that she would simply not manage to survive until the liberation. You can see some excerpts from her diary on the screens.

A large-scale campaign to evacuate the civilian population from the Sudzha district of the Kursk region is currently under way. Having been taken to temporary accommodation facilities, our citizens are giving frank testimony about the atrocities committed by the Ukrainian armed forces and mercenaries. I shall give just a few quotes. Here is what Elena Savchenko, an inhabitant of the village of Zaoleshenka, had to say: "A Ukrainian soldier lined six people up against a wall in the market square and said that he had done 15 years in prison and couldn't care less whom he was going to kill." And here is Viktor Belobrov speaking, an inhabitant of the town of Sudzha: "They whisked off all the vehicles – school buses for

children, the entire car fleets of companies – and took them to Ukraine. They plundered the courtyards of neighbouring buildings. It was awful – all the doors had been forced open.” We will circulate these testimonies after the meeting.

We call upon international and relevant intergovernmental organizations to take a firm stand against the terrorist outrages perpetrated by the Kyiv regime against the civilian population in violation of international humanitarian law. The same appeal was issued by the participants in an international teleconference on the Kyiv regime’s crimes in the Kursk region that was organized on 10 March in a Vienna-Moscow-Geneva format by our delegation together with the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva. It was attended by, *inter alia*, representatives of the United Nations, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the non-governmental organizations Doctors Without Borders/Médecins Sans Frontières and Geneva Call, who had the opportunity to hear about the Ukrainian armed forces’ crimes first-hand from inhabitants of the Kursk region. The number of documented crimes by the Ukrainian armed forces is off the charts. There is simply no way any longer that these can be ignored by international organizations.

Mr. Chairperson,

Our vision for a settlement remains unchanged. We are in principle committed to a peaceful resolution of the conflict and agree with the proposals to cease the hostilities, but it is our understanding that such a cessation must lead to long-term peace and eliminate the root causes of this crisis. Otherwise it has no point for us.

Utterly unacceptable are the notions about achieving “peace only through strength”, which are encouraging the Kyiv regime to keep carrying out terrorist attacks against the civilian population. That is what already happened in the early hours of 11 March, when the Ukrainian armed forces launched a massive attack on civilian objects in Russia’s regions using unmanned aerial vehicles – an attack that was, in effect, timed to coincide with the US-Ukrainian contacts taking place in Saudi Arabia on the question of a settlement of the conflict, and also with OSCE Secretary General Feridun Sinirlioğlu’s working visit to Moscow. Only yesterday, just before the telephone conversation between Russian President Vladimir Putin and US President Donald Trump, the Ukrainian armed forces undertook five failed attempts to invade the Belgorod region. Through such barbaric methods, the Kyiv camarilla, which is suffering daily defeats on the battlefield, is evidently making a last-ditch effort to prove its combat capability and impose its conditions for potential negotiations.

We stress that freezing the conflict is unacceptable – it is a question of ending it once and for all. All the more so as, according to leaks made to German-language media, the European Union intends to rearm Ukraine in the event of a temporary ceasefire.

In this connection, during contacts between Russia and the United States of America at the highest level on 18 March, our side outlined some points of principle regarding the US proposal to declare a 30-day ceasefire. They include the need to ensure an effective ceasefire along the entire line of engagement, stopping the rearming of the Ukrainian armed forces and the forced mobilization in Ukraine (for the information of Western colleagues who would like the conflict to go on “for a few years” more: Ukrainian public opinion is already being acclimatized, through the media and online platforms, to reports that a draft law is being developed on registering adolescent boys from the age of 14 years upwards with the military authorities, and that the text is 70 per cent ready). In addition, there are significant risks related to the intractability of the Kyiv regime, which has already repeatedly violated agreements that had been reached. We have cited relevant examples in this room on more than one occasion.

The Russian leader also pointed out that a key condition for preventing an escalation of the conflict and working towards its resolution through political and diplomatic means must be the complete termination of the provision of foreign military aid and intelligence to Ukraine. That is a point of principle.

Guided by humanitarian considerations, President Putin confirmed his willingness to take up President Trump's appeal for the lives of Ukrainian military personnel who are encircled in the Kursk region to be spared. If they surrender, their lives will be guaranteed and they can count on being treated decently in accordance with the norms of international law and Russian legislation. President Trump was informed about the Ukrainian armed forces' terrorist crimes against Russian citizens in that region.

Our President also confirmed his willingness for the conflict parties to mutually refrain from strikes on energy infrastructure for 30 days, and likewise for the initiative to ensure the safety of navigation in the Black Sea to be implemented.

We trust that the work on reaching a Ukrainian settlement initiated in this Russian-US format will continue unhindered.

Thank you for your attention.