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**STATEMENT BY
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THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS ON MILITARY
SECURITY AND ARMS CONTROL, AT THE 1099th PLENARY MEETING OF
THE OSCE FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION**

26 February 2025

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

Mr. Chairperson,

Over the past few weeks, many European capitals, which for years have styled themselves as peacekeepers, have voiced the conviction that the conflict in Ukraine must continue. Suffice it to cite the remark by Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen: “Peace in Ukraine may be more dangerous than ongoing war.” This confirms what Russia has been saying for a long time – it was the West that planned, financed and provoked the Ukrainian conflict, and now many of its representatives are trying to do everything they can to ensure that the bloodshed continues.

It has long been obvious that the events in Ukraine are a direct result of the world and European development of the late twentieth/early twenty-first century and of the aggressive policy that the West was pursuing long before the special military operation began. After the end of the Cold War, the course was set for a geopolitical restructuring of the world with the imposition of the notorious “rules-based order”. Despite our legitimate and well-known concerns, there have been six waves of NATO expansion. The unceremonious attempts to draw Ukraine into the Alliance, with the country’s transformation at the same time into an anti-Russian military bridgehead, were one of the key causes of the current crisis. To achieve these goals, the West has invested money, bought politicians and entire parties, and rewritten history.

Until the past few days, the false thesis has been sounded ceaselessly in the West that Russia started the war, that it is the “aggressor” and therefore its territory can be attacked with NATO weapons systems, and that Russian citizens almost “deserve” the suffering and regular bombing by the Ukrainian armed forces. By contrast, Ukraine is supposedly “defending itself” and has a free hand to do anything it wants. This is how you, dear colleagues, have been presenting the case here at the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) for all these past years.

But where were the NATO and EU member States when radicals seized and usurped power in Kyiv in February 2014, and a wave of pogroms, violence and murder swept through the cities of eastern Ukraine?

Why did they remain silent when aggressive nationalist slogans rehabilitating Nazi henchmen were heard from Kyiv?

How is it that the champions of democracy and pluralism of opinion turned a blind eye to the announcement by the Kyiv regime in April 2014 of an anti-terrorist and, essentially, punitive operation against its own population in order to suppress dissent and eliminate political opponents? It was then that the Nazi Banderite regime's intensive military operations against Donbass, the shelling of peaceful towns, intimidation and unthinkable acts of violence began. But has there been a single voice from Europe in defence of these people? On the contrary, a wave of NATO military aid, foreign instructors and advisers poured into Ukraine, who for years have been training the Ukrainian armed forces to fight in an urban environment, as we have subsequently seen in major cities such as Mariupol, Artemovsk and Avdeyevka.

Almost every week, the Russian delegation to the FSC demonstrates to participating States the consequences of the increasing shelling by the Ukrainian armed forces of the civilian population of our country. But we should also recall the victims of the Kyiv regime who lost their lives at the very beginning of the conflict.

On 2 May 2014 in Odessa, Ukrainian radical nationalists deliberately set fire to a building where opponents of the new authorities had taken refuge. At least 48 people lost their lives, most of whom were burned alive, died of carbon monoxide poisoning, fell to their death from upper floors, or were killed on the ground by the rampaging mob.

On 2 June 2014, there was an air strike on the building of the Lugansk Regional State Administration. Eight people died – three men and five women. Some 30 civilians were injured by shrapnel. The attacks and bombing of civilians have not stopped since then.

On 27 July 2014, on a day that the Donetsk People's Republic still calls "bloody Sunday", the Ukrainian armed forces launched an artillery strike on Gorlovka, causing dozens of civilian casualties and 13 deaths, including 23-year-old Kristina Zhuk with her ten-month-old daughter in her arms. The memorial complex Alley of Angels was opened in Donetsk in memory of the children of Donbass who have died as a result of shelling by armed Ukrainian formations. Go there, perhaps a simple human feeling called conscience will awaken in you.

It was then that the people of Donbass took up arms to defend their lives, their homes, their rights and their legitimate interests. At the same time, a referendum was held on the independence of the People's Republics of Donetsk and Lugansk. The Kyiv regime refused to engage in direct dialogue for peace with the official representatives of these republics or to implement the Minsk agreements. As a consequence, in subsequent years, according to calculations by the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM), some 14,000 people have fallen victim to the Kyiv regime.

We also remember well that the election promises of Volodymyr Zelenskyy, who came to power on a "peace platform", turned out to be just another smokescreen. Calls for resolving the conflict in Donbass, normalizing relations with Russia and protecting the rights of the Russian-speaking population have never been taken up in practice. The choice was made in favour of resolving the conflict by force: in addition to the fortifications built over the years, the Ukrainian armed forces amassed about 125,000 troops in Donbass in 2021. By February 2022, the intensity of the shelling by Ukrainian armed formations had increased dramatically. This was recorded by the SMM but ignored by the Western participating States.

Under these circumstances, Russia had no choice but to recognize and protect the heroic People's Republics of Donetsk and Lugansk. In compliance with Chapter VII, Article 51, of the Charter of the United

Nations, the Russian special military operation for the demilitarization and denazification of Ukraine was launched with the approval of the Federation Council. Its publicly stated goal is to prevent the genocide of the civilian population of Donbass, which the Kyiv regime has subjected to shelling and a blockade for eight years with the connivance of the West.

Over the past few years, the regime of former President Zelenskyy, whose term has already expired, has shown its true colours. War crimes by the Ukrainian armed forces, the systematic use of terrorist methods, widespread corruption, contract killings and the annihilation of the civilian population have become the norm for modern Ukraine, which has completely lost its autonomy. Suffice it to say that the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has spent tens of billions of dollars in financing the activities of the Ukrainian State apparatus.

The collective West has also finally thrown off its mask, unleashing a hybrid war against our country: sanctions, the participation of mercenaries and then military specialists in combat operations, the provision of intelligence support, persecution and harassment of Russian citizens and Russians abroad, and attempts to abolish Russian culture and language. While a real demand for peace in Ukraine is now taking shape, as recently as Monday, six NATO countries announced new tranches of military aid to enable the Kyiv regime to continue fighting.

It is time for military strategists in Brussels to reconcile themselves to the fact that last year was a turning point for the armed forces of the Russian Federation in achieving the special military operation's objectives. The Kyiv regime is no longer in a position to significantly change the situation on the battlefield.

It is important to finally recognize that the selfishness and arrogance of Western countries have already led to an extremely dangerous state of affairs. We see that, under the pretext of the need to counter the Russian Federation, the process of building NATO's allied forces has been reoriented from crisis response to the conduct of large-scale, high-intensity military operations against a comparable adversary. Since February 2022, the number of coalition troops deployed in the Baltic States and Eastern Europe has increased 2.5 times, from 13,500 to 33,500.

We should like to point out with a full sense of responsibility that we regard calls to inflict a "strategic defeat" on Russia in one way or another as demonstration of reckless adventurism by Western politicians. Apparently they fail to realize the scale of the threat, which could turn into a tragedy. This seems to be acknowledged by the Republican administration led by Donald Trump that has come to power in the United States of America, which no longer uses the word "aggressor" in relation to Russia and has officially announced its intention to achieve peace as soon as possible.

Understandably, this is provoking panic in a number of EU Member States. After all, they have been covering up the Kyiv regime's war crimes and inciting Russophobia for almost a decade. They ignore the fact that the obstacle to peace remains the criminal usurper (or dictator, as the US President calls him) in Kyiv, who has driven himself into a corner by decreeing a ban on peace treaty negotiations with the Russian Federation.

At the same time, from the first days of the Ukrainian crisis, we have advocated a diplomatic solution. The negotiations in Belarus and Türkiye, and the Istanbul agreements, were agreed upon by all in principle. But these peace initiatives were ultimately rejected, accompanied by provocative smear campaigns.

Today's calls for common sense must be backed by a comprehensive and long-term eradication of the root causes of the current crisis. The peace proposal put forward by the President of the Russian

Federation, Vladimir Putin, on 14 June 2024 and the Istanbul agreements should be taken as the basis for any potential settlement options.

We will not be satisfied with simply freezing the conflict; we must talk about ending it once and for all.

Ukrainian troops must withdraw completely from the entire territory of the People's Republics of Donetsk and Lugansk and the Kherson and Zaporozhye regions within the administrative borders that existed when they were part of Ukraine. The new realities that have emerged as a result of the will of the inhabitants of these regions and are enshrined in the Constitution of the Russian Federation should be confirmed.

The rights of Russians and other national minorities in Ukraine must be respected. Violations of these rights currently run counter to the Charter of the United Nations and numerous conventions.

The aggressive line of NATO expansion, including drawing Ukraine into the Alliance, which, despite our repeated warnings, has become the main trigger of the conflict, must be reversed. Ukraine's neutral, non-aligned and non-nuclear-weapon status should be reaffirmed.

The conditions for sustainable and long-term peace and for ensuring the security and the legitimate interests of all sovereign States in the region must be established. We believe that the work begun in this area should continue unhindered.

Thank you for your attention.