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**STATEMENT BY
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RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS ON MILITARY
SECURITY AND ARMS CONTROL, AT THE 1112th PLENARY MEETING OF
THE OSCE FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION**

16 July 2025

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

Madam Chairperson,

Today we are taking stock of the discussion of the situation in Ukraine that took place during the current session of the OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation, and, unfortunately, the conclusions we are obliged to draw are dispiriting.

At the start of the year, as Donald Trump's administration came to power in the United States of America, hopes were kindled about a resolution of the Ukrainian conflict. Upon the Russian Federation's initiative and with the support of our Turkish partners, direct negotiations with the Ukrainian side without preconditions were initiated in Istanbul. Two rounds of talks were held on 16 May and 2 June, during which agreements were reached on a number of humanitarian issues.

However, the international community was very soon able to see for itself that those seeking to derail the peace process are in the ascendant in Europe. What is more, judging by the signals coming from Kyiv, appetite for the diplomatic option seems to have been lost there yet again. A next round of talks with Russia, which would be the third round, is not even being mentioned by the opposite side.

German Federal Chancellor Friedrich Merz recently stated that the diplomatic means for settling the conflict in Ukraine had been "exhausted" (Berlin, 9 July). He has long been attempting to make it out to be as if "more compromise and more concessions are ... no longer reasonable" (Berlin, 13 May). It is symptomatic that these statements are being made by a politician who has not even tried using diplomatic means to resolve the conflict and, therefore, has no right to say that they have been exhausted.

The irrevocable decision has been taken in Europe to prepare for an "inevitable" war against Russia, with Ukraine being used, even before the start of such a war, as a tool for inflicting a "strategic defeat" on our country. Additionally, NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte is of the view that the Alliance's member countries have to "do more" in order to "chang[e] the trajectory of the conflict" and enable the Kyiv regime to "get to [a] position of strength" (Brussels, 13 January). At the same time, the European Union is bracing

its citizens for the expansion of armies, mobilization of the population, management of casualties and protracted hostilities. During a plenary session of the European Parliament in Strasbourg on 8 July, the fast-tracked rearming of Europe was designated an absolute priority so that, by 2030, Europeans would be ready to “defend themselves”. Of course, the chatter about “defence” is sheer demagogic covering up preparations for a war of aggression against our country aimed at gaining control over its resources. However, there is no ready cash in Europe to pay for such an adventure, which means the money printing press will have to be switched on and inflation allowed to run wild. The leaders of EU Member States and several other countries already seem to have made up their minds that it is to be guns rather than butter. After all, the will of the electorate can simply be ignored with the help of numerous tried-and-tested mechanisms. Like the conflict in Ukraine, the militarization of Europe will continue to be paid out of the pocket of each European – a state of affairs that is already comparable to the levying of a hidden tax.

Against this backdrop, unfounded statements are regularly to be heard from Western delegations in the Hofburg claiming that Russia is somehow refusing a settlement, as are demands that we immediately and without preconditions agree to a ceasefire. Yet, European leaders were not so long ago criticizing the very possibility of any kind of ceasefire, which, as former German Federal Chancellor Olaf Scholz stated, would “merely lead to a freezing of the conflict” (Bürgenstock, 2024). What has changed since then? The fact that there is a new US administration, to which the European political agenda needs to be adapted? Or the situation on the battlefield? But we can see perfectly well that all that talk about an “unconditional” ceasefire pursues but one goal, namely to give the Ukrainian armed forces a breathing space, time for mobilization and training, for plying them with weaponry so that they can then be thrown into battle again.

As far as our position is concerned, Russia has been and remains open to a political and diplomatic resolution of the Ukrainian conflict. It is our understanding that a ceasefire is possible only once the Ukrainian armed forces and other paramilitary formations of Ukraine have started their complete withdrawal from Russian territory, including the People’s Republics of Donetsk and Lugansk and the Zaporozhye and Kherson regions, and the provision of foreign military aid and intelligence to the Kyiv regime has been stopped completely. We stress that it must be a question of lasting peace, and not a truce. We have no need for a pause that would be used by the Kyiv regime and its handlers for regrouping and military build-up.

It goes without saying that a sustainable settlement is impossible unless the underlying causes of the conflict are eliminated.

Above all, it is essential to put an end to the threats to Russia’s security arising from NATO enlargement and the drawing of Ukraine into that military bloc. NATO has never been a defensive alliance. It is impossible to explain the military adventures in Yugoslavia, Iraq and Libya in terms of a striving to defend member States’ territory. Who were the NATO countries defending themselves against there? Who were they being attacked by? That is why the emergence of NATO bases in Ukraine and the way that country is being drawn into a bellicose alliance pose an immediate threat to our national security. Can there still be any doubts on that score? You should study an interview given to ZDF on 12 July by Christian Freuding, the co-ordinator of the Special Staff for Ukraine at the German Ministry of Defence, in which he talked enthusiastically about supplying arms to the Kyiv regime for the launching of strikes deep inside Russian territory. All these phantom pains of militarism that have taken hold of Germany are not conducive to looking for ways of peacefully settling the conflict in Ukraine. The authorities in Berlin should remember that war frenzy inevitably proves to be catastrophic.

Madam Chairperson,

The European militarists have long since scrapped their international obligations not to supply weapons to States where these can be used to violate human rights and fundamental freedoms. For us,

though, it is crucial to ensure the realization of human rights in the territories that remain under the control of the Kyiv regime, which since 2014 has been wiping out everything connected with Russia and with Russian and Russian-speaking people – the Russian language, Russian culture and traditions, canonical Orthodoxy, Russian-language media. Since 2014, Ukrainian tormentors and executioners have killed over ten thousand Russian and Russian-speaking residents of Donbass, all of them innocent civilians. These genocidal practices continue.

Around 120 people within the territory of our country are killed or injured every week by Ukrainian militants and foreign mercenaries. Just last week, the average intensity of the Ukrainian armed forces' strikes on civilian objects in our country was as high as 400 strikes per day. The enemy deployed some 2,800 munitions, including multiple-launch rocket systems, artillery shells of 152 mm and 155 mm calibre (including shells with cluster warheads), mines, grenades and unmanned combat aerial vehicles. The overwhelming majority of the weapons used by the Ukrainian armed forces to target the civilian population are Western-made.

At the OSCE a veil of silence continues to be drawn over the deliberate attack that unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) belonging to the Ukrainian armed forces carried out on 8 July against a beach in Kursk, where many of the city's inhabitants, including children, were relaxing. The Ukrainian thugs knew whom they were targeting. Four civilians were killed, including Tolya, a five-year-old boy who shielded his mother from shrapnel with his body. An additional six civilians were injured. The reason for the high number of casualties in this attack on a city beach was the launching, in terrorist fashion, of follow-up strikes on emergency services and ordinary civilians who rushed to the aid of the victims of the initial UAV strike. This raises the following question: given that the EU countries are claiming that the Kyiv regime is defending their values "on the battlefield", is this, then, what their values look like?

On that same day, the Ukrainian armed forces used drones to launch strikes on civilian objects in the town of Rylsk in the Kursk region, specifically on the infectious disease ward of the central district hospital, an ambulance service building and the administrative premises of an agribusiness. Two women were injured. It is horrifying that strikes by the Ukrainian armed forces against ambulances have become a daily reality in a swathe of Russian territory from the Kherson region to the Belgorod region. Such practices flying in the face of international humanitarian law are evidently also part and parcel of European "values". As a consequence, the local authorities in Russian regions have decided to retrofit ambulances with anti-drone cages.

It is precisely for this reason that we see no other solution than to continue liberating territories within the zone of the special operation. No fewer than 20 population centres have been liberated over the past two weeks, including: Dachnoye (Dnepropetrovsk region); Bessalovka (Sumy region); Malinovka (Zaporozhye region); Voskresenka, Dyleyevka, Zelenaya Dolina, Mayak, Karl Marx village, Nikolayevka, Novosergeyevka, Novoukrainka, Razino, Petrovka, Poddubnoye, Tolstoy, Chervonaya Zirka and Shevchenko (Donetsk People's Republic); and Melovoye, Novaya Kruglyakovka, Petrovskoye and Sobolevka (Kharkov region).

It is also quite clear that, in these circumstances, there is a need for international legal recognition of the new territorial realities that have arisen following the incorporation of Crimea, Sevastopol, the Donetsk People's Republic, the Lugansk People's Republic, and the Zaporozhye and Kherson regions into Russia. Their inhabitants chose their own destiny through a free expression of their will in a referendum. All these provisions must be set down in a legally binding agreement on a peaceful settlement.

Madam Chairperson,

The Russian Federation is ready to work towards achieving the special operation's objectives both on the battlefield and within the framework of a negotiation process with Ukraine. However, this by no means implies that the Kyiv regime's terrorist attacks will be left unanswered. Everyone should understand that the language of blackmail, ultimatums and threats is unacceptable to us. We for our part will take all necessary steps to safeguard Russia's security and interests.

The armed forces of the Russian Federation continue to demilitarize Ukraine. The objectively verifiable depletion of the Ukrainian armed forces' stocks of weapons is becoming increasingly noticeable for the Kyiv regime's Western handlers. The much-vaunted Patriot surface-to-air missile systems – fragments of Patriot missiles are regularly discovered in the middle of residential areas in densely populated Ukrainian cities and are responsible for the death of civilians – have already become a scarce commodity.

In addition to waves of strikes on gas and energy infrastructure facilities that enable the Ukrainian military-industrial complex to keep on functioning, and on arms depots and temporary bases of Ukrainian armed formations and foreign mercenaries, our armed forces have recently begun launching attacks on the territorial manning centres of the Ukrainian armed forces. This new development has been met with enthusiasm on Ukrainian social media – people are asking for it to be kept up and are even sharing the co-ordinates of such centres. Why? Well, because the Ukrainian authorities have long since turned them into a punitive body for violently rounding up men on the street to be sent to the front line, and permitted the officers working for such centres to use violence against the civilian population with impunity. People are beaten up and cowed – and then it is off to the trenches with them. The Ukrainians themselves are engaged in wholesale torching of the cars belonging to territorial manning centres; the mothers and wives of the men pursued by the “people-catchers” are pelting these with stones. And we are not speaking figuratively here at all.

Only the other day, the death of a 45-year-old ethnic Hungarian in Ukraine came to light. This man, József Sebestyén, had dual Ukrainian and Hungarian citizenship. It is reported that he was forcibly mobilized in mid-June, and that he died in a local hospital on 6 July as a result of his having been viciously beaten. But for most EU citizens the tragic incidents linked to the territorial manning centres in Ukraine are simply of no consequence.

Many conscription-age men are fleeing Ukraine, while others are willing to spend the last of their money on ensuring that they are not sent to the bloodbath. It is not surprising that the official number of desertions in Ukraine since the start of this year alone is already in excess of 100,000. Ukrainians do not want to die for a murderous regime that is serving Western interests and is incapable of achieving victory on the battlefield (even the argument about “defending one's land” has ceased to work, given that around half of the country's arable land has been sold off to foreign companies and transnational corporations). In the long run, the Ukrainian armed forces will suffer increasingly painful losses. Suffice it to mention the huge disparity between the numbers of dead soldiers repatriated following the Istanbul talks: 6,060 bodies were handed over to the Ukrainian side, while our side received the bodies of 78 fallen Russian soldiers. The West can put a stop to this if it desists from undermining efforts to bring about a settlement.

Madam Chairperson,

The goals set at the beginning of the special military operation and outlined in detail by the President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin, in his address of 14 June 2024 will be achieved in any case. The longer our adversaries and their patrons continue with their fruitless attempts to “inflict a strategic defeat on

Russia on the battlefield” and to scare our people through acts of intimidation, the tougher the actual “conditions on the ground” that they will have to face up to.

Ukraine should go back to the origins of its statehood and adhere to the spirit and the letter of the documents that laid down its legal foundations. I would remind you that a neutral, non-aligned and non-nuclear status for that country is provided for in its 1990 Declaration of State Sovereignty. Going forward, what is on the table is the demilitarization and denazification of Ukraine, the revocation of anti-Russian restrictive measures, the withdrawal of all lawsuits against Russia and the return of its assets that have been unlawfully seized, or essentially stolen, in the West.

For the time being, although there is an achievable peace option, the other side lacks the political will that is so essential towards its implementation. Instead, those in power in Kyiv and in Western capitals are opting for terrorist attacks, arms shipments and the continuation of hostilities under the slogan “down to the last Ukrainian – and then we’ll see”.

And yet we are hopeful that our opponents have not lost all common sense, and that a peaceful settlement necessarily involving the elimination of the conflict’s root causes is still possible.

Thank you for your attention.