

The OSCE Secretariat bears no responsibility for the content of this document and circulates it without altering its content. The distribution by OSCE Conference Services of this document is without prejudice to OSCE decisions, as set out in documents agreed by OSCE participating States.

FSC.DEL/424/23/Add.1
17 November 2023

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY
MS. IULIA ZHDANOVA, MEMBER OF THE DELEGATION OF THE RUSSIAN
FEDERATION TO THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS ON MILITARY SECURITY
AND ARMS CONTROL, AT THE 1062nd PLENARY MEETING OF
THE OSCE FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION**

15 November 2023

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

Madam Chairperson,

The war unleashed against the Russian Federation, in which the Kyiv regime is acting as a proxy and which is being waged at the expense of Ukrainian citizens' lives, is a hybrid war sustained by the selfish interests of the collective West as it strives for inordinate financial and economic enrichment. For the benefit of those in this room who still entertain any doubts, we should like to show an excerpt from a hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in the United States Congress on 8 November, at which the Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs, James O'Brien, was present to testify. After he was asked when the State Department would begin engaging in diplomacy and stop stoking war, he stated frankly that the hostilities in Ukraine were "good for our [the US] economy" and, indeed, were fostering a production boom. Can one expect our greedy US colleagues to renounce, for the sake of peace, this Ukrainian "business venture" that is so lucrative for them? It is much to be doubted, given that the thirst for profit has already permeated all echelons of the US political elite and business establishment.

That the United States of America really is the puppet master behind the Kyiv regime was demonstrated in September, when Mark Milley, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, invited CBS reporters to the Situation Room, where the situation on the battlefield is monitored in real time by means of satellites. What is more, the general did not hide the fact that all that data, including the locations of objects deep behind Russian lines, was being passed on to the Zelenskyy regime by the Americans. However, it is evident to everyone by now that the Western "military machine" put at the Kyiv junta's service has failed in its confrontation with the Russian Army.

It must be said from the outset that these puppets did not live up to their overseas handlers' expectations and, in effect, botched the much-touted counteroffensive. The revelations by the European Union's chief diplomat, Josep Borrell, are telling. Whereas back in April 2022 he had been prophesying military successes for the Kyiv regime, he hastily revised his forecasts in November of this year, noting how in Ukraine "the prospect of victory over Russia is not immediate." In these circumstances the "strategists" in Kyiv have launched yet another information and psychological warfare operation directed at their own

population – ordinary Ukrainians are now being made to believe that there was no counteroffensive at all. But how will the Kyiv regime account to the citizens of Ukraine for the death and wounding of more than 90,000 mobilized recruits, most of whom were forcibly packed off to the front? How will it argue away the destruction of some 600 tanks and around 2,000 armoured vehicles, including Western-made ones?

According to assessments by international observers, the Kyiv regime has lost at least one fifth of the German Leopard tanks that were at its disposal. Significantly, our troops are causing many NATO tanks to go up in flames when they are still in the rear, that is, up to 10 km from the front line. The training of Ukrainian fighters in accordance with NATO standards also leaves much to be desired. In July of this year, in an interview with the US magazine *Forbes* these described the training activities in Germany as not corresponding to the realities of modern warfare, as a result of which the Ukrainian armed formations had suffered colossal losses in the first days of the counteroffensive.

Captured Ukrainian servicemen confirm that among their ranks there are many who are simply deserting their combat positions since they no longer see any point in offering armed resistance. It has been noted by experts that, as a consequence, personnel problems may prove to be more dangerous for the Kyiv regime than disruptions in the deliveries of Western weapons – even if these do arrive, there will quite literally be no one there to make use of them. That is evidently why the criminal Kyiv regime has begun sending the most vulnerable categories of citizens into the area of combat operations. A few days ago, a pregnant young woman in Odessa, a medical worker by profession, was handed her call-up papers ordering her to report for service in the Ukrainian armed forces. Now, that was by no means an isolated incident. It would seem that the Kyiv regime is prepared to put the entire population of Ukraine into the field to fight for the geopolitical ambitions of the United States, NATO and the European Union.

One further result of Ukraine having come under external control is that it has turned into a heavily subsidized economy that is riddled with the cancer of corruption. Sponsoring that country is turning out to be a heavy burden for the coalition created by the US Government. According to the International Monetary Fund, the total public debt of Ukraine in 2023 will reach 88.1 per cent of the country's gross domestic product (GDP), and by 2025 it will have exceeded 100 per cent of GDP. What is more, the Western countries are well aware that part of the funds dished out to Ukraine are being downright misappropriated.

There are increasing signs that members of the Zelenskyy regime are engaged in arms trade involving the weapons being delivered by the Western countries as military aid. According to MENA Defense, an Algerian website, these officials may well be behind illegal schemes for transferring NATO weapons to the Middle East. Thus, in the course of Operation "Swords of Iron", Israeli troops have discovered a number of Western weapons systems in the Gaza Strip, which were most likely sourced from Ukraine via the Dark Web. These include NLAW and AT-4 grenade launchers, Switchblade unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), Phoenix Ghost loitering munitions, Javelin anti-tank missile systems and large quantities of man-portable air defence systems (MANPADS) and small arms. We recall that, on 22 June, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said that weapons supplied to Ukraine by the West had already been turning up near Israel's borders. All this eloquently illustrates the utter futility of the extrabudgetary project "In support of strengthening the capacities of the Ukrainian authorities in preventing and combating illicit trafficking in weapons, ammunition and explosives in all its aspects" that is being implemented under the OSCE banner by Western countries.

Corruption, organized crime, drug trafficking, economic devastation and arms smuggling have by now become the calling cards of the US-, NATO- and EU-reared regime that has ensconced itself in Kyiv. Well, that is a mighty fine track record for an aspiring member of the European Union.

To this one must still add the unceasing violations of international humanitarian law by the Ukrainian armed forces, including shelling attacks on the civilian population using lethal indiscriminate weapons, as a result of which thousands of civilians have been killed and injured. The intention to annihilate the Russian-speaking Donbas is obvious. Makeshift unmarked mass graves, which had to be dug outside the specially designated sites, testify to this. Between August and October 2021, five such mass graves were discovered near the city of Pervomaïsk (in the Lugansk People's Republic), from which the remains of at least 295 civilians who had died as a result of shelling by the Ukrainian security forces back in 2014 were exhumed.

We have still not heard the Western "civilized" community categorically condemn these crimes. We believe that our colleagues are well aware that in this way they are giving the nationalist regime in Kyiv carte blanche to continue the armed violence.

Over the past week, the number of strikes launched against civilian objects on the territory of the Russian Federation along the line of engagement increased substantially, as did the number of civilian casualties: 84 people were injured and 16 killed. Expensive, Western-manufactured long-range precision missile systems were used to carry out the strikes. In view of the characteristics of these systems, it may safely be asserted that the strikes were not launched spontaneously but, rather, that they were targeted strikes, intended to inflict irreparable harm on the civilian population. Let us cite just a few facts.

On 7 November, six people were killed and 55 were injured, including three children, as the result of a strike on the Voroshilovsky district of the city of Donetsk using a HIMARS multiple-launch rocket system. The enemy struck three times, employing the tactic of repeated shelling attacks on crowded areas.

On 9 November, a rocket attack on Skadovsk in the Kherson region left five civilians dead and 11 injured.

Strikes, including some using cluster munitions, have been launched against medical facilities – on 8 November, the building of Central Municipal Hospital No. 16 in Donetsk was targeted, while on 12 November a clinic in Kremennaya (Lugansk People's Republic) came under attack.

Over the past 24 hours, three civilians were injured in the Donetsk People's Republic, including a four-month-old child.

It is telling that, in addition to their regular shelling of social facilities, the Ukrainian armed forces are now also using UAVs to "hunt" for civilians. In the Donetsk People's Republic alone, this criminal tactic claimed nine civilian casualties over the past week.

Delegations can see on the screens the rest of the evidence of crimes that we have received from these regions.

We foresee that, once again, no reaction to the Kyiv regime's infamies will be forthcoming from our Western colleagues. Most telling in this regard are the cynical assessments by the White House, according to which Israel is not disregarding the norms of international humanitarian law in connection with the situation in Gaza. It is evidently the same with Russian territories – as far as the United States and its satellites are concerned, these are not covered by international humanitarian law.

The destruction of the Kakhovka hydroelectric dam testifies to the utter indifference of the Kyiv regime and its handlers towards the fate of civilians. Our warnings and appeals for everything necessary to be done to thwart the Kyiv regime's criminal designs were not heeded. Since July 2022, Ukrainian armed

formations had been continually carrying out numerous attacks on the Kakhovka hydroelectric power plant, including strikes using US-made HIMARS multiple-launch rocket systems. This methodical shelling ultimately caused the collapse of structures at the plant on 6 June, leading to an uncontrolled discharge of water from the Kakhovka reservoir into the lower reaches of the Dnieper. As a result, a large-scale humanitarian and environmental disaster occurred in the region. The Russian Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment estimates that Ukraine's destruction of the Kakhovka hydroelectric power plant has caused almost 470 billion roubles' worth of damage. What took place there was a gross act of terrorism against an infrastructure of purely civilian significance and essentially also a war crime within the meaning of Article 56 of the 1977 Protocol I Additional to the Geneva Conventions. We demand that a firm stand be taken against these barbaric actions and that an international investigation into this crime be conducted.

The Russian investigative and judicial authorities are applying the principle of no impunity for the crimes perpetrated by the Kyiv regime. High-ranking Ukrainian officials have been charged *in absentia*, including former Prime Minister Arsenii Yatseniuk, former Acting Head of the Presidential Administration Serhii Pashynskyi and former Acting Foreign Minister Andrii Deshchytsia. They were involved in the adoption of the criminal decision to conduct a so-called anti-terrorist operation in the south-east of the country, which was launched against the civilian population of Donbas on 14 April 2014. As part of the work on investigating the facts relating to the shelling of the civilian population and civilian objects in that region, charges have been filed against members of the Ukrainian military leadership – specifically against Valerii Zaluzhnyi, Serhii Naiev, Oleksandr Syrskyi and Volodymyr Kravchenko – who commanded units of the Ukrainian armed forces the criminal actions of which resulted in the death and injury of scores of civilians, including children. Evidence of the Ukrainian nationalists' extreme brutality towards the civilian population of Donbas is being documented; the perpetrators are being criminally prosecuted and face sentences of up to 30 years. Furthermore, 465 foreigners from 39 countries are being charged with the crime of mercenarism.

To wrap up, we should like to make it quite clear to our colleagues that, in banking on a “strategic defeat” being inflicted on Russia, the collective West has made a serious blunder.

It is time the Kyiv regime and its handlers realized that there is no way they will be able to score a victory over Russia on the battlefield. Our country's defence industry complex is comprehensively supplying our air force, navy and land forces with advanced types of weapons. Production output has increased sevenfold for tanks, 4.5 times in the case of light armoured vehicles and 60-fold for some types of ammunition. Despite the West's brazen pressure on our international partners in military and technical co-operation, the effective use of Russian armaments against modern Western equipment in the zone of the special military operation has noticeably heightened global markets' interest in those weapons.

Our economy has adapted to sanctions. It is displaying great resilience. GDP growth by the end of 2023 will be close to 3 per cent. By way of comparison: in leading European economies one may observe a downward trend. This should help in understanding who is being hit the hardest by sanctions that were instigated and are being ramped up above all by the United States. Externally, we are creating a non-Western-controlled mechanism to support trade and establish supply chains that are not vulnerable to any harmful influence from outside.

We are rebuilding the new regions of the Russian Federation and ensuring the safety of our citizens. Over the past few months alone, a primary healthcare centre providing outpatient clinical services was repaired in Mariupol. Construction of a medical centre of the Federal Medical-Biological Agency was completed in the same city. With 13 departments, it has the capacity to treat more than 50,000 patients a year. A new perinatal centre has been built in the city of Donetsk. The regions recently incorporated into Russia will become industrialized and self-sufficient federal constituent entities in the foreseeable future.

Our country has a robust ideological and material basis for achieving the special military operation's objectives, which we will fight for however long it takes. No matter how much the West may wish it, there will be no abjuration of Russian national interests. Neither confrontation, nor economic sanctions – let alone attempts to undermine the multi-ethnic and multi-confessional unity of Russia – will produce the outcome that the collective West wants.

Thank you for your attention.