

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/235/23
9 June 2023

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY
MR. KONSTANTIN GAVRILOV, HEAD OF THE DELEGATION OF THE
RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS ON MILITARY
SECURITY AND ARMS CONTROL, AT THE 1048th PLENARY MEETING OF
THE OSCE FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION**

7 June 2023

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

Madam Chairperson,

We strongly condemn the destruction by the Ukrainian armed forces of the Kakhovka hydroelectric power plant in the Kherson region, which has led to a large-scale humanitarian and environmental disaster.

As early as October 2022, the Russian Federation drew the attention of the United Nations and the entire international community to the Kyiv regime's plans to destroy the Kakhovka hydroelectric dam. We warned that a reckless attack by Ukraine would lead to catastrophic flooding of nearby territories and irreparable harm to thousands of civilians. What did the participating States of the OSCE, as a regional organization under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, do to prevent this heinous crime? The answer is – nothing. On 6 June, the disaster became a reality.

The breach of the dam caused a significant rise in water downstream of the Dnieper. Settlements have been flooded and entire villages are submerged. The evacuation of local residents has begun. According to preliminary data, around ten people are unaccounted for in the vicinity of Novaya Kakhovka alone. The damage to agriculture and the ecosystem at the mouth of the Dnieper as a result of this sabotage by the Kyiv regime is colossal. The imminent depletion of the Kakhovka reservoir will disrupt Crimea's water supply and the reclamation of agricultural land in the Kherson region.

What happened was a grave act of terrorism against an infrastructure of purely civilian significance and in fact a war crime within the meaning of Article 56 of Protocol I additional to the Geneva Conventions, 1977.

This brazen stunt was planned in advance by the Kyiv regime for military purposes as part of a so-called "counteroffensive". As we understand it, the Western handlers were not just aware of this, but also carefully co-ordinated and facilitated their puppets' plans.

Already on 29 December 2022, *The Washington Post* published the following revelation: Ukrainian armed forces major general Andriy Kovalchuk "considered flooding the river. The Ukrainians, he said, even

conducted a test strike with a HIMARS launcher on one of the floodgates at the Nova Kakhovka dam, making three holes in the metal to see if the Dnieper's water could be raised enough to stymie Russian crossings but not flood nearby villages. The test was a success, Kovalchuk said." We draw particular attention to the fact that the co-ordinates of targets for HIMARS hit by Ukrainian troops are always agreed upon by Ukraine and corrected at one of the US bases in Europe. In other words, the terrorist regime received the approval of its puppet masters to blow up the dam in case it needed to move units from the Kherson area to the area of offensive operations.

Now that the criminal plan has been implemented, the international community can appreciate its true implications: while the left bank of the Dnieper, controlled by Russian troops, has seen the most extensive flooding, on the right bank the Ukrainian armed forces are establishing defensive positions.

We take the view that the Kyiv regime and its Western patrons bear full responsibility for the unfolding tragedy, the main victims of which are once again civilians, cynically used by the Ukrainian-NATO coterie as expendable material in an all-out hybrid war against our country. The Russian Investigative Committee has started criminal proceedings for an act of terrorism resulting in significant property damage and other grave consequences.

We call upon the OSCE Secretary General, the Bulgarian Chairmanship of the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) and the participating States of the Organization to condemn the criminal actions of the Ukrainian authorities, which are becoming more and more inhuman and pose a serious threat to European and global security. We insist that all the circumstances of the barbaric attack on the Kakhovka hydroelectric power plant be established.

Madam Chairperson,

The Anglo-Saxon countries are keeping up the heat in the Ukrainian conflict and blocking sensible initiatives for a peaceful settlement in order to maintain the hegemony of transnational capital based in the United States of America and the United Kingdom and to extend their ability to affect key global resources. The price of this policy is that, by supporting the Maidan regime in Kyiv in its plans to seize Crimea and the new Russian regions by force and then to rid these territories of all things Russian, the West is destroying its reputation. Apparently, this is how NATO and the European Union envisage ensuring the security and welfare of the billion people living in Europe and North America. Under these circumstances, the West has no moral right to accuse Russia of committing crimes.

As recently as last year, we informed the OSCE participating States that the Ukrainian leadership was preparing a provocation involving a dirty bomb. Specialists are well aware that Ukraine has the technological and production capacity at the Institute of Nuclear Research of the National Academy of Sciences and the Eastern Mining and Processing Plant to build such radiological explosive devices. While Western governments were inactive, the Main Intelligence Directorate of the Ukrainian Ministry of Defence set up a service to develop a plan to deliver and plant dirty bombs with timer fuses at energy facilities. To that end, five combat sorties were flown over Russian territory by light aircraft of the Ukrainian armed forces. Two of the pilots were detained by the Russian Federal Security Service and confessed to committing and planning acts of terrorism. What more proof do you need?

There is more. Ukrainian saboteurs have carried out provocations at the Kaliningrad, Kalinin, Kursk, Smolensk and Leningrad nuclear power plants, and the Kyiv regime's troops have shelled the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant (the largest in Europe), where an emergency situation could lead to an accident comparable in scale to the accidents at Chernobyl and Fukushima.

What have NATO and EU Member States done to prevent acts of nuclear terrorism? The answer is that they have done exactly nothing to prevent disastrous developments in Europe.

According to reports, the US Government is continuing to exert pressure on the authorities in Kyiv to increase the intensity of the hostilities, hypocritically making out that the weapons supplied by the West will be enough to influence the course of the armed confrontation. Ukrainian citizens have already fully grasped what is meant by the saying “beware of Greeks bearing gifts”. By tempting the Ukrainian Government with a “transatlantic perspective”, its handlers on the other side of the ocean are in fact merely using Ukraine as a tool for a confrontation with the Russian Federation. High-ranking European officials Josep Borrell and Ursula von der Leyen are well aware that all that is needed to end the conflict is to stop sending weapons to Ukraine, but this is not part of their plans. In defiance of the EU Common Position of 2008, the European Union in Brussels prefers to keep pumping hardware into the criminal regime to commit acts of genocide, crimes against humanity, grave breaches of the 1949 Geneva Convention, attacks on civilian objects and other war crimes.

Similarly, under the guise of providing sanitary and epidemiological aid to the Ukrainian people, the United States has long been busy creating conditions in the Ukrainian military bridgehead for possible aggression against Russia. Suffice it to recall that the location of US biological research is not coincidental. It is conducted in possible areas of deployment for military contingents from NATO member States. Using the scientific potential of such Ukrainian facilities, the United States has made sustained efforts to impose full control over Ukraine’s entire biosafety system so as to achieve a qualitative leap in its own military biological research. However, the vast majority of biological projects and research programmes overseen and directly involving US military specialists have been, and continue to be, classified. In that regard, we should like to reiterate that questions to the United States and Ukraine regarding their compliance with their obligations under the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention will remain in place until we receive an adequate response to our concerns, in the form of the required clarifications and specific steps to rectify the situation.

The Western OSCE participating States have yet to realize that handing over military goods to Ukraine is not an accomplishment or a cause for pride, but a crime. Last week, Ukrainian neo-Nazis continued massive strikes with HIMARS multiple-launch rocket systems and NATO 155 mm artillery on densely populated areas of Donetsk, Dokuchaevsk, Makeevka, Gorlovka and Yasynuvataya. People were killed and injured. The attempts by the Maidan regime in Kyiv literally to wipe out the small Russian border town of Shebekino, where there is not a single military target, go beyond the bounds of common sense. While they pay lip service to international humanitarian law, what have the OSCE participating States actually done to prevent the suffering of non-combatants? The answer is – nothing.

Russian troops have consistently foiled terrorist acts against civilians orchestrated by Ukraine, including acts involving mercenaries from the Polish Volunteer Corps, which is answerable to the Ukrainian Ministry of Defence’s Main Intelligence Directorate. We know that in this country they create the most favourable conditions for Polish mercenaries: for participation in hostilities they are rewarded with parcels of land free of charge in the west of the country in the Volyn, Lviv and Zakarpattia regions. However, what we are talking about is a deliberate action by Ukraine to involve citizens of NATO States in military action on Russian territory. We trust that in the West, and in Poland in particular, they are aware of the consequences this could lead to.

Despite false assurances from Western leaders, weapons supplied to Ukraine by NATO and EU States are already being used on Russian territory. The world media are overrun with pictures of Belgian and Czech rifles, a US anti-tank system and a Polish combat vehicle used by militants in an act of sabotage in the Belgorod region on 22 May. These countries now find themselves in the first ranks of those complicit in

the Kyiv regime's provocations. Perhaps our Ukrainian and Western colleagues in the FSC will give us an answer to the question: did Volodymyr Zelenskyy's team set up the authorities in Brussels, Warsaw, Washington and Prague by chance or was this a deliberate step towards escalation?

Another possibility is that Western weapons from Ukraine are being trafficked. For more than a year, the Russian delegation has been informing the FSC of the black market trade in various types of Western weapons, ranging from the M4 assault rifle to the US-made NLAW anti-tank missile system, which is going quite well to judge by the number of transactions and the rating of sellers on the Dark Web. It has come to the point where smuggled Western weapons from Ukraine, including AT-4 anti-tank grenade launchers and Javelin anti-tank missiles, have begun to appear on the balance sheet of the Mexican Gulf Cartel. What have Western OSCE participating States done to prevent the uncontrolled flow of arms and ammunition from Ukraine to other parts of the world, including into the hands of extremist and terrorist groups? The clear answer is nothing.

Madam Chairperson,

The Russian army and navy are meeting this challenge from the "Ukrainian-Western conglomerate" fittingly, and the combat success unfolding in the zone of the special military operation, success that builds on the broad support of the multi-ethnic people of the Russian Federation, means only one thing for the West – the systematic demilitarization of its "Ukrainian project" and the attrition of the NATO military machine. Over the three days of the Ukrainian "counteroffensive" in all directions, the Ukrainian armed forces lost as many as 3,715 military personnel, 52 tanks, 207 armoured vehicles, 134 cars, five airplanes and two helicopters. In addition to other Western weapon systems, our fighters destroyed three French AMX-10 wheeled tanks and eight German Leopard tanks. The number of such instances is guaranteed to keep on growing.

Western "wonder weapons" have shown their vulnerability against the cutting-edge designs of the Russian military-industrial complex. Western military experts have considerable misgivings about prospective deliveries of US-made F-16 fighter jets to Ukraine, which, in their opinion, are considerably inferior to Russia's latest military hardware. The US Patriot missile defence system has already demonstrated its shortcomings, with pieces from the missile falling on to a road in Kyiv the other day. It is also disappointing for the West that the Pentagon inspector general found that the equipment shipped to Ukraine from the US army depots in Kuwait proved to be largely defective.

Against this background, the Russophobic claims by British Secretary of State for Defence Ben Wallace and his staff seconded to Vienna about the alleged malfunctioning of Russia's weapons look rather naive. We regard these claims as an importunate manifestation of unfair competition by the West, and indeed simply as envy. It is no secret that the defence establishment on the banks of the Thames is renowned for its record low morale and psychological state, with the British armed forces downsizing by almost 20 per cent in the last year alone amid falling officer allowances and mediocre leadership. This is a common trend among European armies. No wonder China manages to poach British and German air force officers as instructors for fighter pilots.

Madam Chairperson,

To achieve the "comprehensive, just and sustainable peace" that the West talks about a great deal, there is a need for a cessation of hostilities by the Ukrainian armed forces and an end to deliveries of Western arms. Ukraine should return to the neutral, non-aligned status enshrined in the 1990 Declaration of State Sovereignty and renounce accession to NATO and the European Union. The new territorial realities resulting from the realization of the right of peoples to self-determination must be recognized. As for the

objectives of the special military operation, they are well known and remain unchanged. There can be no doubt: threats to the national security of the Russian Federation and its citizens will be firmly dealt with, no matter how long it takes.

Thank you for your attention.