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**STATEMENT BY
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RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS ON MILITARY
SECURITY AND ARMS CONTROL, AT THE 1052nd PLENARY MEETING
OF THE OSCE FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION**

19 July 2023

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

Madam Chairperson,

Stability and predictability in the Euro-Atlantic region have been undermined. The member States of the North Atlantic Alliance have for decades been flouting the norms and principles on which a sustainable European security order rested. They ignored Russia's concerns over the expansion of NATO; they taught Ukrainian neo-Nazis to do their bidding and nurtured a militaristic regime in Kyiv, which on 14 April 2014 initiated a war against its own citizens. The NATO countries are today engaging in State-level sponsorship of Ukrainian terrorism. A clear connection can be traced between the Kyiv regime's actions and the directions given to Ukraine by the Alliance.

The terrorist activity of Ukraine's criminal elite against the Russian Federation has intensified after the NATO summit held in Vilnius on 11 and 12 July. An attack on the Kursk nuclear power plant by an unmanned aerial vehicle was thwarted, as were the preparations for the assassination of two Russian journalists by the Kyiv regime's intelligence services. Strikes by dozens of Ukrainian drones against civilian infrastructure in Crimea are repelled on an almost daily basis. The NATO members' attempts to mask their aggressive aspirations regarding our country as well as Ukraine's actions by invoking the Charter of the United Nations do not stand up to scrutiny. There is nothing in common between the Alliance and the United Nations.

In the early hours of 17 July, the Crimean Bridge was subjected to yet another terrorist attack, this time involving two Ukrainian water-surface drones. Two civilians were killed: Alexey and Natalya Kulik. Their 14-year-old daughter, Angelina, has become an orphan; she was admitted to hospital with a closed-skull brain injury. This human tragedy prompted sneering and rejoicing in Ukraine, while over in the West it was cynically hailed as being a part of the Ukrainian "counteroffensive".

According to reports, Western handlers assisted the Ukrainian Navy and Security Service in preparing that terrorist attack. The company Maxar has confirmed that the US-owned WorldView-2 commercial satellite filmed the Crimean Bridge twice in the last month. At the time of the terrorist attack a

US-made MQ-9 Reaper reconnaissance and strike drone was flying over the Black Sea. These are just some of the facts. However, over in Washington, D.C., they continue to deny having anything to do with the actions of their protégés in Kyiv.

The Russian Federation strongly condemns the terrorist attack on the Crimean Bridge. What happened is a senseless crime, since that infrastructure facility has not been used for military transports in a long time. In view of the strike on the Crimean Bridge, an appeal was issued by the United Nations not to attack civilians or civilian infrastructure. However, something tells us that this appeal will not be heeded by the authorities in Kyiv, since the extermination of civilians is the calling card of that bloodthirsty regime.

There should be no doubt that every provocation by the Kyiv regime supported by the Western conglomerate will meet with an appropriate response from the armed forces of the Russian Federation. Last night, high-precision weapons were used to carry out a retaliatory group strike on facilities where preparations were being made for terrorist attacks involving uncrewed boats, and also on a shipyard near Odessa where those boats were being manufactured.

We call upon the Kyiv regime's handlers to show responsibility and bring their influence to bear on their protégés with a view to avoiding a large-scale catastrophe. In that regard, we would draw particular attention to a statement by the Chief of the Main Intelligence Directorate of the Ukrainian Ministry of Defence, Kyrylo Budanov: "We use direct actions. ... We know how to do them and we were proud of using them and we are not afraid of using them". And similarly to some revelations by the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, Valerii Zaluzhnyi, in a recent interview with *The Washington Post*: "As for Crimea ... As soon as I have the means, I'll do something. I don't give a damn – nobody will stop me." The Western ruling elites must understand that, owing to the further setbacks it is sure to experience on the battlefield, the Kyiv regime will keep carrying out new provocations and try to create a pretext for the deployment of a NATO contingent to Ukraine, thereby escalating the regional conflict to the level of World War III. Does this tally with the fundamental interests of the countries and peoples of the European continent? The answer is obviously no.

Madam Chairperson,

The events in Ukraine are arguably the best form of counter-advertising for potential membership of the North Atlantic Alliance. As Mykhailo Podolyak, an adviser to the Head of the Office of the President of Ukraine, put it, the conflict has become a "golden lottery ticket" for the West, since "a third country is fighting its [the West's] strategic adversary on its own territory." In Europe they admit that Ukraine, keen as it is to join NATO, has lost its sovereignty, and that it has no money or military industry. What is more, the degree of indifference displayed by Western politicians towards the Ukrainian armed forces' massive combat losses is such that those politicians are encouraging the Kyiv regime to continue with the suicidal counteroffensive, thereby turning Ukraine into Europe's powder keg.

The decisions of the NATO summit held in Vilnius on 11 and 12 July were drawn up and adopted in a similar vein. Dreaming about inflicting a strategic defeat on Russia, the US Government and its allies are determined to build up their military presence near Russia's borders; they are deploying strike weapons systems there and consistently lowering the threshold for the use of force while strengthening the nuclear component in their military planning. One gets the impression that the Euro-Atlantic allies are preparing in earnest for a major war.

The NATO summit also heralded the release of new "tranches" of military aid for Ukraine. The United States of America and its allies have in effect already begun chasing up Soviet-, Russian- and Western-made weaponry, as well as the associated ammunition, around the world and on a vast scale.

Colossal pressure is being exerted on practically all States that engage in military and technical co-operation with Russia and, likewise, on those possessing obsolete weapons systems. This is a consequence of the “armaments fever” that has taken hold of the United States and the European Union and is compelling the handlers of the Kyiv regime to embark on criminal actions.

At the end of last week, the decision by the United States to ship cluster munitions to Ukraine left the whole world in shock. In the past the US administration had given its assessment of these inhuman munitions by describing their use as a “crime”. However, at the Pentagon they are now convinced that fear of a victory by Russia in the Ukrainian conflict outweighs concerns over the consequences arising for civilians from the use of cluster bombs. US Government representatives, who are the ones making the most noise about the importance of demining in Ukraine, are deliberately fomenting the massive contamination of areas on both sides of the combat line with unexploded bombs for decades to come. We have already received the sad news that a child was killed in the village of Tarasovka in the Zaporozhye region as a result, it is believed, of the detonation of a cluster bomblet. We regard the decision by the United States and the consequences arising therefrom as a crime, and we reserve the right to take proportionate countermeasures.

The further transfers of Western air defence systems to Ukraine are a separate issue. A spokesperson for the Ukrainian Air Force, Yuriy Ihnat, confirmed that these units were being stationed within urban areas, since the Ukrainian air defence was unable to shoot down Russian drones and missiles at a long distance from residential buildings. Supplying the Kyiv regime with Western anti-aircraft missile systems will allow it to continue using the Ukrainian people as human shields. However, that consideration will of course not stop NATO.

As for the potential transfer of F-16 fighter jets to Ukraine, for which flight training will begin to be provided to Ukrainian military personnel in the coming weeks, we have already informed the United States, the United Kingdom and France as nuclear powers that we cannot disregard the ability of these aircraft systems to carry nuclear weapons. During combat operations our military cannot be expected to try to work out whether each specific airplane is equipped for the delivery of nuclear warheads or not. The very fact of such systems turning up in the possession of the Ukrainian armed forces will be regarded by us as a nuclear threat from the West.

A final highlight of the NATO gathering of Russophobes was that, despite the spirited efforts of its European “junior partners”, the United States blocked Ukraine’s accession to NATO, putting that country on an “eternal waiting list”, as it were. President Zelenskyy openly stated in Vilnius that Ukraine was a “donor of security” for Europe. He confirmed in effect that the Ukrainian Government was sacrificing the lives of ordinary Ukrainians to serve NATO’s interests. That would not be the case if Ukraine had reverted to the neutral status that it had pledged itself to maintain, as reflected in the text of its Declaration of Sovereignty, when it bloodlessly gained independence in 1991.

Madam Chairperson,

The armed forces of the Russian Federation continue to use long-range high-precision weapons to carry out effective strikes on the Ukrainian armed forces’ reserves and military equipment arriving from the West, thereby considerably reducing the enemy’s offensive capacities. We know that the results of our battlefield performance are being monitored by foreign reconnaissance units, that is, those of NATO countries. They note the great effectiveness of our lines of defence and of the minefields that have been laid, as well as the high-quality work of our army aviation and fighter aircraft.

Russian troops are successfully repelling attacks by the Ukrainian armed forces in the direction of Zaporizhzhia, Kherson, Donetsk, South Donetsk and Krasnyi Lyman. Offensive operations are being

conducted near Kupiansk. The principal targets for our military continue to be marshalling areas for troops, areas where NATO supplies are being transported, and strongholds of the Ukrainian armed forces and foreign mercenaries.

As is customary, we shall cite some figures – they will evidently not gladden Ukraine’s Western sponsors. Since 4 June the enemy has lost more than 26,000 military personnel and 3,000 armaments of various kinds, including 1,244 tanks and other armoured combat vehicles, 914 special operations tactical vehicles, 25 mobile multiple-launch rocket systems, and 403 field artillery pieces and mortars. Western weaponry has been burning on the battlefields in a particularly spectacular manner. This includes 17 German-made Leopard tanks, five French-made AMX wheeled tanks and 12 US-made Bradley armoured infantry fighting vehicles. Incidentally, the planned opening of an armoured vehicle production plant in western Ukraine by the German corporation Rheinmetall could prove to be yet another instance of foreign cash being thrown out of the window – that factory is a legitimate military target for us.

Here we should like to quote the Chief of Staff for the US Defense Intelligence Agency, John Kirchhofer, who said that the HIMARS launchers and Storm Shadow missiles being delivered to Ukraine were not the “holy grail”, and that even cluster munitions would not enable Ukrainian forces to break through the Russian defences. It is not surprising that the NATO members now speak not of a Ukrainian victory but of the need to maintain the country’s defence capability.

As intensive fighting takes place, we continue to observe the mass surrender of soldiers from the Ukrainian armed forces, who had previously been mobilized forcibly and sent to the front line. During interrogations they confirm that their commanders were thrusting them into battle, threatening to execute them otherwise. Many of those mobilized have medical conditions that are incompatible with active service. They complain about a lack not only of weapons and ammunition but even of drinking water. As a result, morale in the ranks is extremely low. Those who underwent the much-hyped training abroad speak of it in no flattering terms, even pointing out that after returning from Germany they were ordered to forget everything they had been taught there, since it was “useless”. These prisoners exhort their fellow soldiers not to volunteer for front-line service and to avoid mobilization by any means.

Madam Chairperson,

The United States and the NATO countries bear full responsibility for having stoked conflict in Ukraine and nurtured a terrorist regime that is undermining regional and international security. We condemn in the strongest terms the egregious violations of international law by the Ukrainian Government and its handlers, including violations of the Charter of the United Nations and OSCE principles and commitments. The true rationale behind the events in Ukraine is already becoming apparent to the international community – to the extent that US presidential candidate Robert F. Kennedy Jr. has given public confirmation of the ominous military biological activities of the United States in Ukraine. In the long run the criminal regime in Kyiv should, therefore, not pin its hopes on new tranches of military aid worth billions, or on moral support from the collective West, or on inflows of mercenaries facilitated by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and CIA-controlled private military companies.

The Russian Federation has always confirmed its openness to engaging in negotiations, but given the rejection of these by the authorities in Kyiv, where they consider such negotiations to be “pointless, dangerous and fatal for Ukraine and Europe”, we will continue to pursue the objectives of the special military operation through armed combat and will ensure that the threats to the security of our country and Russian citizens which are emanating from Ukrainian territory are eliminated.

In closing, a few words about the outcomes of the Bulgarian Chairmanship of the Forum for Security Co-operation. These are, unfortunately, pitiful. You systematically ignored the opinions of participating States and turned an OSCE decision-making body into a tool for advancing NATO interests. This is unacceptable and runs counter to the very nature of the Organization. In that regard, we do not consider it appropriate for the Russian delegation to attend the closing session of the current round of negotiations. We trust that future Chairmanships will not repeat your mistakes. The Forum will otherwise be plunged into a systemic crisis.

Thank you for your attention.