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**STATEMENT BY
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RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS ON MILITARY
SECURITY AND ARMS CONTROL, AT THE 1072nd PLENARY MEETING OF
THE OSCE FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION**

6 March 2024

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

Mr. Chairperson,

The international community is going through an era of revolutionary change. A more equitable, multipolar world continues to be established. The imbalanced model of world development that for centuries secured for the Western colonial powers an economic growth that outperformed everyone else is irrevocably becoming a thing of the past.

Regarding as they do the consolidation of Russia as one of the leading development hubs of the modern world and its self-reliant foreign policy as a threat to Western hegemony, the United States of America and its satellites used the measures taken by the Russian Federation to protect its vital interests as a pretext for unleashing a full-scale hybrid war aimed at weakening our country and undermining its constructive civilizational role.

However, the collective West made a major miscalculation and has run up against the firm stance and resolve of our multi-ethnic people, of the people of Crimea and Sevastopol, of the inhabitants of a resurgent Donbas and the other new regions of our country. Every day, our troops on the various fronts of the special military operation are demonstrating that no stable and secure world order is possible without a strong and sovereign Russia.

In response to the West's unfriendly actions, Russia continues to defend, by all legitimate means, its right to existence and free development. It is building on its strategic initiative within the framework of the special military operation. It is strengthening its force groupings in the Western strategic theatre in order to firmly counteract the threats associated with NATO's latest expansion, namely its expansion to Sweden and Finland. Russia is bolstering its defence industry complex in order to increase our country's scientific, technological and industrial capabilities, among others. The President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin, spoke about this in detail during his address to the Federal Assembly on 29 February of this year.

Against this backdrop, over the past few days we have again seen the gospel of militarism gushing forth from Western capitals, where unsuccessful efforts are being made to inflict a “strategic defeat” on our country. It has already become clear to the entire international community that, having failed to adapt to the post-Cold War environment, the US-led North Atlantic Alliance continues to justify its existence by one means alone, namely by fanning the flames of instability in Europe. However, the cynical use of Ukraine as a tool for combating Russia and the transformation of that country into a testing ground for NATO weapons could be a mere overture to the Alliance entering the hostilities. We have repeatedly warned about this.

There is no shortage of facts suggesting that the United States, NATO and the European Union are gearing up for a “military solution” to the conflict concerning Ukraine.

The President of France, Emmanuel Macron, has said that he is considering the possibility of allowing special forces and other military units to cross the Ukrainian border in order to present Russia with a “strategic dilemma”. But when his subordinates frantically attempted to put a different construction on what he had said, the French leader at once backed down.

As for the United Kingdom, the fact is that its special forces and military personnel have been operating in Ukraine for a long time. German Chancellor Olaf Scholz has let the cat out of the bag in that regard. Similarly, the British newspaper *The Times* previously shed light on how the Chief of the UK Defence Staff, Admiral Tony Radakin, was “secretly helping Ukraine with its battle plans”, including with the development of a strategy for attacks on warships of the Russian Navy’s Black Sea Fleet. Now it is clear why the UK delegation to the Forum for Security Co-operation devotes such inordinate attention to the Black Sea – the British are conducting there a “special operation” of their own against our country under the cover of the Ukrainians.

What really takes the biscuit are the remarks by Pentagon chief Lloyd Austin, who said that “if Ukraine falls, ... NATO will be in a fight with Russia.” We stress that these are words uttered by an official representative of a nuclear power, which should have a special responsibility for maintaining global strategic stability.

Something else that crosses all red lines is the content of a 38-minute conversation, recently intercepted by our intelligence services, in which high-ranking German officers talked about the possibility of supplying the Kyiv regime with Taurus long-range missiles and rendering practical assistance to the Ukrainian armed forces in putting them to combat use against a civilian object on the territory of the Russian Federation, namely the Crimean Bridge. This vividly illustrates Germany’s full-scale involvement in the conflict concerning Ukraine. It is most telling that one of the participants in the conversation was the commander of the Air Force of the German Armed Forces, Lieutenant General Ingo Gerhartz, who back in June 2022 exhorted NATO to be ready to deploy nuclear weapons against Russia. At around the same time, in an interview with *Der Spiegel*, the Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany, Annalena Baerbock, voiced her regret over the fact that the West could not intervene militarily in Ukraine. That the Germans trampled upon Ukraine’s black soil on more than one occasion in the twentieth century, is something that we remember distinctly to this day. But we paid them back all right, as the Germans and indeed all Europe remembers.

We most firmly assert that the United States and its allies, including some that possess nuclear weapons, are balancing dangerously on the verge of a military confrontation with Russia. It seems that in Europe they have forgotten about the fate of those who once sent their troops to march on our country. Now, though, as President Putin has said, any potential interventionists will face far graver consequences: “They must grasp that we also have weapons capable of striking targets on their territory.” This is not

“nuclear rhetoric”, as it is now fashionable to say among political dilettantes in the West, but elementary deterrence logic.

On a separate note, we would point out that the translation into practice of talk about transferring F-16 aircraft and Taurus missiles to Ukraine by actually making such shipments poses huge risks to international and European security. The EU and NATO countries do not have any “miracle weapon”, nor can they ever have one. You can see this for yourselves once again by taking a look at the screens, where you will see how your Western weapons are going up in flames. Neither the M1 Abrams tanks (of which we have already destroyed four), nor the Leopard tanks (we have lost count of the number destroyed), nor the Patriot air defence systems have given the Kyiv regime any strategic advantages – they have, rather, prolonged its death throes at the expense of the lives of thousands of Ukrainians. Our troops are looking forward to encountering the neo-Nazis’ remaining Abrams tanks on the battlefield. The US-made M142 HIMARS multiple-launch rocket systems also burn nicely: three of them have been destroyed over the past few days alone.

The armed forces of the Russian Federation continue to build on their combat success, with more than 327,000 square kilometres of territory already having been liberated from the neo-Nazis. After the Ukrainian fighters fled from the Avdeyevka defence node, our force grouping did not allow them to dig into positions along the Petrovskoye-Lastochkino-Severnoye line and continues to drive the enemy westward. In view of this, the Ukrainian authorities have initiated a forced evacuation in the Kharkiv region. Well, it must be said that the Kyiv regime’s leaders are thinking in the right direction.

At the same time as Western arms deliveries to the Kyiv regime are drying up and its future funding is hanging by a thread, the neo-Nazis are being particularly brutal in their treatment of wounded and captive Russian soldiers. Fighters from the Ukrainian armed forces are themselves publicly disseminating videos that show our soldiers being shot dead. A video of this kind from the Limansk area was posted recently. In it one can see two instances of unarmed wounded soldiers being slaughtered in essentially bestial fashion; one of them had been walking towards the Ukrainian armed forces’ positions with his arms raised.

The Kyiv regime and its handlers are hushing up the catastrophic situation at the pretrial detention facility in the town of Bucha, which they themselves have dubbed a “Guantánamo”. During the interrogations there, abuses are regularly committed against captives with the involvement of fighters from the neo-Nazi Azov formation, which is banned in Russia. We are in the possession of eyewitness testimony from Russian military personnel who have returned from captivity and spoken about how they were kept in inhumane conditions – specifically in cells holding up to 28 people and with daily rations of no more than 350 grams. In the course of interrogation they were subjected to physical violence, such as beatings with rubber sticks; carrier bags [placed over their heads] would be used to cut off their oxygen supply. There are no representatives of the International Committee of the Red Cross or other international organizations at the facility – at least, none of the soldiers who have returned from captivity ever saw any there.

To a considerable extent, responsibility for these latest executions of Russian prisoners and instances of abuse and torture against them rests with the Kyiv regime’s Western handlers, which created that Nazi regime and reared an entire generation of Ukrainians possessed by ideas of hatred and national superiority. By casting a veil of silence over these people’s crimes, they are making such killings possible. Russia, for its part, will not let these crimes go unpunished.

One further incendiary manifestation of how the United States and NATO have set their sights on confrontation with Russia is the disregard shown by Western countries for their international obligations, which, coupled with the large-scale corruption of the authorities in Kyiv, is leading to the emergence of a black market for weapons and to these being smuggled from Ukrainian territory to various hotspots.

According to numerous testimonies by mercenaries who served in the “Foreign Legion” set up by the Kyiv regime, commanders in the Ukrainian armed forces responsible for the conveyance of military equipment are selling under the table significant quantities of the anti-tank missile systems and other types of weapons that are being delivered. The weapons arriving in Ukraine are resold through shady channels that mainly run through Moldova and thence to ports in Romania (Constanța) and Bulgaria (Varna and Burgas). They are subsequently transported to the Middle East – in particular, it is known that such weapons have fallen into the hands of Syrian and Iraqi anti-Government groups, including terrorists from ISIS and the Al-Nusrah Front.

In Kyiv they do not even try to deny that the location of individual weapons and items of military equipment is not being recorded. No inventory documents are issued that would enable one to establish whether specific items are inside the country. Suffice it to say that the Pentagon has opened more than 50 criminal investigations related to the misappropriation of US military aid for the Kyiv regime. However, something tells us that this is part of the political show put on by the authorities in Washington. Over there they realize that it is impossible to secure a military victory for the Kyiv regime. Dragging out the conflict – that is what interests them now. The United States, in particular, does not even hide this, making it clear that prolongation of the hostilities is a way of shoring up the US economy. However, for confirmation of the “dependability” of Western patronage one need only turn to the former puppets of the United States in Afghanistan. The Americans abandoned them, fleeing that country in disgrace. Which means that they will run away again, leaving behind heaps of weapons – weapons that they themselves had supplied. It is just a matter of time.

In closing, I should like to particularly emphasize that the aforementioned actions by the United States and its satellites – from the nurturing of neo-Nazis in Ukraine all the way to those dangerous slogans about open military confrontation with Russia – have in effect led to the dismantling of the European security system. In these circumstances our country is ready to work towards enabling, in the foreseeable future, the emergence of a new framework for equal and indivisible security in another format, namely a Eurasian one.

As the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Russia, Sergey Lavrov, said during the Antalya Diplomacy Forum on 1 March, the basis for this process has already been created by the relations that have been established between the Eurasian Economic Union, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. We see an opportunity for the Gulf Cooperation Council and the League of Arab States to join in these efforts. Everything that is happening is a natural process. All the more so since the centre of global development has shifted to South Asia and East Asia. On the whole, Eurasia is now the engine of the world’s development. The Euro-Atlantic area, where aggressive militarism holds sway, has irretrievably forfeited that role.

Thank you for your attention.