

Chairmanship: Belarus

1010th PLENARY MEETING OF THE FORUM

1. Date: Wednesday, 18 May 2022 (in the Neuer Saal and via video teleconference)

Opened: 10 a.m.
Closed: 11.15 a.m.

2. Chairperson: Ambassador A. Dapkiunas

3. Subjects discussed – Statements – Decisions/documents adopted:

Agenda item 1: GENERAL STATEMENTS

Current security situation in the OSCE area: Russian Federation (Annex 1) (FSC.DEL/210/22), France-European Union (FSC.DEL/211/22), Canada, United Kingdom (Annex 2), Switzerland (FSC.DEL/208/22 OSCE+), France, Belarus

Agenda item 2: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- (a) *Announcing and Reminding Mechanism pursuant to FSC Decision No. 10/02 (FSC.DEC/10/02)*: Chairperson
- (b) *Distribution of an FSC draft decision on the agenda, timetable and modalities for the eleventh Annual Discussion on the Implementation of the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security (FSC.DD/2/22)*: Chairperson
- (c) *Update on the 2022 OSCE-UNODA Scholarship for Peace and Security training programme for young professionals, the majority being women*: Representative of the Conflict Prevention Centre (FSC.GAL/52/22)
- (d) *Workshop on SALW Reporting and the OSCE Online Reporting Tool, to be held via video teleconference on 24 May 2022 (FSC.GAL/47/22 Restr.)*: Representative of the Conflict Prevention Centre

- (e) *Briefing on the 93rd meeting of the OSCE Communications Group and the 2022 Global Exchange of Military Information, held on 28 April 2022:*
Representative of the Conflict Prevention Centre

4. Next meeting:

Wednesday, 25 May 2022, at 10 a.m., in the Neuer Saal and via video teleconference



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Forum for Security Co-operation**

FSC.JOUR/1016

18 May 2022

Annex 1

ENGLISH

Original: RUSSIAN

1010th Plenary Meeting

FSC Journal No. 1016, Agenda item 1

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

Mr. Chairperson,

Before proceeding with my main statement, I should like to mention a highly important milestone for the Russian Federation and its allies. On 16 May, a meeting of the leaders of the Member States of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) was held in the Kremlin in connection with the 30th anniversary of the Treaty on Collective Security and the 20th anniversary of the Organization. Over this period the CSTO has attained indisputable authority as a regional defence structure that ensures security and stability in Eurasia. During the summit, a joint statement was signed confirming the Member States' determination to continue their co-operation in various areas pertaining to the development of defence and military capabilities, and also to continue increasing co-ordinated interaction in the international arena. One of the central topics of the summit was the current state of regional and international security, and the Russian delegation will also touch on this in its statement today.

Mr. Chairperson,

We do not cease to be amazed by our Western colleagues' malicious attempts to accuse the Russian Federation of "aggressive nuclear rhetoric". Loose interpretations of our country's doctrinal foundations in the field of security and defence are unacceptable. We consider it essential to emphasize once again that Russia's policy in the nuclear military sphere is of a strictly defensive nature. We are guided firmly by the principle whereby the risks of nuclear war, which should never be unleashed, must be kept to a minimum – in particular, by preventing any armed conflict between nuclear powers. At the initiative of the Russian Federation, these tenets were reaffirmed in joint statements and documents adopted in the framework of the "nuclear quintet".

Unfortunately, it is the Western nuclear "troika" that is currently drifting towards other positions, and with it the North Atlantic Alliance, which has declared itself a "nuclear alliance". With regard to our country, they have deliberately opted for a strategy of waging "war by proxy". The Democrat Majority Leader in the House of Representatives of the United States Congress, Steny Hoyer, is already openly asserting that the United States of America is at war with Russia. Such "balancing on the edge" risks worsening the situation in

Europe, already tense as it is. The realization of this is slowly dawning on the European capitals. In a study prepared by experts from the Research Services of the Bundestag and entitled “Legal issues related to the NATO countries’ military support for Ukraine: between neutrality and participation in the conflict” it is pointed out that even indirect intervention in an armed conflict can lead to grave legal and military consequences, from geographical spillover of the conflict all the way to nuclear escalation.

Despite this, the States of the “civilized” West led by the United States continue to step up their arms deliveries to Ukraine. They are of course in it for the long haul. Rubbing its hands at the prospect of making profits galore, the US Government is handing out new commissions to the military-industrial complex and creating the most favourable conditions for the contractors of the Department of Defense. Together with its allies, it has already handed over to the Ukrainian Government more than 60,000 anti-tank systems and over 25,000 man-portable air defence systems (MANPADS). Interestingly, the US Secretary of Defense, Lloyd Austin, admitted that it was impossible to track whether these dangerous weapons were ending up in black markets. To think that not so long ago as December an OSCE best practice guide on the secure storage of MANPADS, prepared at the initiative of US military experts, was adopted at the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC). Just six months have passed and that document can already be consigned to the dustbin of history: its authors are themselves busy flooding Europe with systems that are capable of inflicting devastating damage on civil aviation and rail transport.

Mr. Chairperson,

During all these years, Ukrainian territory has served as a “bridgehead” for the implementation of dangerous biological projects that bear all the hallmarks of a secret military biological programme and of the illegal testing of pharmaceuticals. In the course of the special military operation to protect Donbas, the Russian Ministry of Defence has received new evidence that a number of projects funded by the Pentagon imperilled the lives and health of Ukrainian citizens. US scientists conducted dangerous secret testing of potentially hazardous bioproducts on patients at clinical psychiatric hospitals in the Kharkiv region. Even children were put at risk, for in 2020 they were meant to become the main spreaders of tuberculosis in the Slovianoserbsk district of the Luhansk People’s Republic (LPR). Counterfeit banknotes infected in laboratory conditions with highly pathogenic biological material were selected as the source of infection. It is telling that the nationalist regime in Kyiv cynically gave the green light for all these experiments fraught with epidemiological threats for Ukraine, the European region and the whole world. Our goal is to put a stop to these dangerous activities. Once the collection and analysis of material confirming the violation of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention by the United States and Ukraine have been completed, Russia intends to activate the mechanisms under Articles V and VI of the Convention.

The threat of chemical terrorism by the fascistoid nationalists and units of the Ukrainian armed forces remains all too real. There is no need to go far to find examples. On 11 May, with a view to accusing the Russian army of using chemical weapons, the Security Service of Ukraine and nationalists blew up a tank containing fertilizer (presumably ammonium nitrate) near the settlement of Dovhenke in the Kharkiv region. On 16 May, not far from Mazanivka in the Donetsk People’s Republic (DPR), a landmine filled with a quantity of ammonium nitrate weighing up to one tonne was detonated, as a result of which a

toxic cloud with an altitude of around one kilometre was swept in the direction of Kramatorsk by gusts of wind. A few days ago, a highly dangerous provocation on the premises of the Zarya chemical enterprise in the city of Rubizhne was forestalled by LPR people's militia units. As directed by US and Polish instructors, Ukrainian fighters loaded sacks containing ammonal on to railway cars there and, furthermore, mined the storage tanks containing around 40,000 tonnes of the most dangerous chemical reagents (ammonia, nitric acid, sulphuric acid, benzene and other hazardous substances). If this criminal act planned by the nationalists and their handlers had come to pass and those chemicals had exploded, some 300,000 civilians could have been exposed directly to chemical contamination. Naturally, the US and NATO handlers are fond of such methods: after all, they disseminated them far and wide on the territory of Syria. However, it is staggering to realize that the nationalist regime in Kyiv is willing to go as far as to engage in "negative publicity" and sacrifice the lives of its own citizens to justify its endless demands for Western weapons.

Official circles in the NATO member countries do not hide the fact that they take pride in their efforts to train tens of thousands of Ukrainian fighters for war against Russia. Moreover, we continue to receive evidence pointing to the participation of officers from Western countries in combat operations on the side of the Ukrainian Government. It has come to light that British military personnel are regularly involved, behind the scenes, in directing the Ukrainian forces on the front line using NATO reconnaissance data. In the Zaporizhzhia region they have been constantly moving between the command points at Zahradivka and Oleksandrivka near the front line since the end of April. It would be very useful for the Forum to hear about this first-hand from the United Kingdom delegation itself.

As we have already said, the NATO members are not squeamish about co-operating with inveterate neo-Nazis. A retired French serviceman, Adrien Bocquet, who was in Ukraine on a humanitarian mission, had the following to say in an interview with the French radio station Sud Radio: "The Azov fighters are everywhere with their neo-Nazi badges I am shocked that Europe is equipping Nazis with weapons. Their uniforms are embroidered with SS insignia. Not only do they not hide their views: they flaunt them. I worked with these people and provided medical assistance to them. They openly talk about being willing to eliminate blacks and Jews ... I witnessed war crimes. They were all committed by the Ukrainian army. But we don't talk about that in France ..." Over the past few months, the Russian delegation to the FSC has provided lots of evidence attesting to the militant neo-Nazism that is rampant in Ukraine, but in response we have heard merely accusations that we are lying and spreading propaganda. It is perfectly clear that what is behind all this are the notorious double standards of the "civilized" West. Nothing new here. When Islamists from ISIS killed people in Europe or the United States, they were referred to as terrorists. When they beheaded Syrian soldiers, they were called freedom fighters in the West. It is the same now. In Europe the neo-Nazis from the Azov regiment are hailed as "defenders of Mariupol and the whole of Ukraine", while the gunman who carried out a mass shooting in a supermarket in the US city of Buffalo is described as a neo-Nazi and racist. Yet he was going around with the same Nazi symbols as the Azov fighters.

Mr. Chairperson,

There is no doubt that the objectives of the special military operation in Ukraine set by the President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin, will be accomplished. The denazification and demilitarization of the pro-NATO "bridgehead" at our borders continue.

Since the start of the special military operation, 168 airplanes, 125 helicopters, 912 unmanned aerial vehicles, 309 anti-aircraft missile systems, 3,134 tanks and other armoured combat vehicles, 385 multiple-launch rocket systems, 1,542 field artillery pieces and mortars, and 2,983 special operations tactical vehicles have been destroyed. High-precision long-range missiles are being used to systematically take out members of Ukrainian reserve formations and foreign mercenaries and instructors, and also to destroy consignments of weapons and military equipment from the United States and European countries prepared for shipment to Donbas.

The profound moral degradation in the ranks of the Ukrainian army, which is fighting side by side with neo-Nazis, is evidenced by new facts about war crimes and outrages perpetrated against wounded and killed Russian soldiers. In a news report by the media outlet HNL from the Netherlands, images from Kharkiv were shown in which one could see the bodies of members of our military personnel lying in the middle of a street, where they had been arranged to form the letter “Z” by fighters from the nationalist battalions. There was also a charred body that had been splayed across an anti-tank hedgehog. Moreover, Russian journalists discovered a torture chamber near Kherson, in which the booby-trapped body of a man wearing a Russian military uniform was found; the body had no legs and showed signs of torture. Next to it were syringes, narcotics and also boxes of the type used to store US-made Javelin missiles. How much more evidence attesting to egregious war crimes and violations of international humanitarian law by the Ukrainian neo-Nazis do we have to proffer to get the West, which proclaims itself to be “civilized”, to take heed of them? Or are these “civilized” States of the view that committing crimes against Russians is permitted and that such crimes can be forgiven?

The Russian Ministry of Defence and law enforcement agencies continue to record numerous instances of the Kyiv authorities’ inhuman attitude towards the civilian population of Ukraine, along with the use of social infrastructure facilities for military purposes. We will circulate an updated list of these facilities, which, unfortunately, keeps on growing. We are recording strikes on civilian objects by the Ukrainian armed forces. On 16 May, the Ukrainian nationalists shelled residential areas of Kherson using Smerch multiple-launch rocket systems. All ten shells were intercepted by Russian air defence systems. The civilian population was deliberately bombarded in revenge for their support for the Russian Federation. Militants from “territorial defence” battalions, together with Ukrainian Security Service officers, recently conducted raids in Kharkiv, Sumy, Chernihiv, Odessa and other cities to identify local residents expressing pro-Russian views or simply communicating by telephone with relatives and friends in Russia. These people are subjected to physical violence and then taken to an unknown destination. To this day nothing is known about the fate of many of them.

The attention of the international community is currently riveted on the situation around the Azovstal plant in Mariupol. On Monday, as a result of negotiations with the Ukrainian military personnel holed up inside the plant, an agreement was reached on evacuation of the wounded. On 16 May, the fighters from the Azov nationalist unit and the Ukrainian military began surrendering. Over the past 24 hours, 165 combatants have laid down their arms and surrendered, including 51 who were seriously wounded. Our armed forces are ensuring a ceasefire and the operation of a humanitarian corridor through which those in need of medical assistance are being taken to a hospital in Novoazovsk in the DPR. We will continue informing the FSC about the real situation around Azovstal.

Mr. Chairperson,

To sum up. We understand perfectly well that US and British handlers are directing the actions of the Ukrainian Government on the ground and in the information space, that they are behind the dragging out of negotiations with the Russian Government with a view to inflicting damage on our country. In this regard, I should like to state the following. The aggressive revisionist course pursued by the collective West, which has gained a new lease of life amid the special operation being conducted in Ukraine, is dealing a grave blow to European and global security. We can see what the North Atlantic Alliance, in its militaristic frenzy, is readying itself for by deploying 16 battalion task forces to Poland and the Baltic countries and by creating a carrier strike group equipped with cruise missiles in both the Mediterranean Sea and the Baltic. We are aware of what is behind the hegemonial attempts by NATO to steamroller northern Europe and then the Asia and the Pacific region. These and other alarming tendencies, which go far beyond the purview of the FSC's mandate, need to be taken into account in the Russian Federation's relations with States that we officially consider to be "unfriendly". We do not rule out the adoption of appropriate measures in response to threats to the national security of Russia.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. I request that the text of this statement be attached to the journal of today's FSC meeting.



1010th Plenary Meeting
FSC Journal No. 1016, Agenda item 1

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF THE UNITED KINGDOM**

Mr. Chairperson,

Once again, our Russian colleagues persist in delivering the Kremlin's hate-filled lies and fantastical propaganda. Everyone knows, I suspect even my Russian colleagues know, that Putin's war of choice in Ukraine is built on lies.

The Kremlin created false pretexts for invasion, obscures the truth, and hides and denies war crimes. Putin wants truth to be but one casualty of this conflict.

The Russian Government said they would not invade Ukraine: They did. They said they would not target civilian infrastructure: They have remorselessly attacked residential areas, schools and hospitals. They said they would not harm civilians: Yet we are seeing strong evidence of war crimes, including reports of mass graves and heinous atrocities in areas once held by Russian forces such as Bucha.

The fact that Russia is trying to distract and deceive its own population with lies and disinformation suggests that they know that the real rationale for invading Ukraine has no solid foundation whatsoever.

The simple truth is that Russia is responsible for this horrific war, in breach of the UN Charter, and for the needless deaths of thousands of men, women and children. To characterize such a situation as anything other than a human tragedy for both sides denies the reality.

And today that reality is, Putin's Plan A has failed and his attempted "land grab" in eastern Ukraine has lost momentum and fallen significantly behind schedule. Despite small-scale initial advances, Russia has failed to achieve substantial territorial gains over the past month whilst sustaining consistently high levels of attrition. Russia has now likely suffered losses of one third of the ground combat force it committed in February. The reality bears worth repeating: Russia has now likely suffered losses of one third of the ground combat force it committed in February.

Russian forces are increasingly constrained by degraded enabling capabilities, continued low morale and reduced combat effectiveness. Many of these capabilities cannot

be quickly replaced or reconstituted. Russian bridging equipment has been in short supply throughout the conflict, slowing and restricting offensive manoeuvre. Russian unmanned aerial vehicles are vital for tactical awareness and directing artillery, but have been vulnerable to Ukrainian anti-air capabilities.

In response, Russia is increasingly relying on massed artillery strikes as it attempts to regain momentum in its advance in the Donbas. This is a tactic we have seen Russia use elsewhere in Ukraine. For example, in the Chernihiv region north of Kyiv, approximately 3,500 buildings are estimated to have been destroyed or damaged during Russia's abandoned advance towards the Ukrainian capital. Eighty per cent of the damage has been caused to residential buildings.

The scale of this damage indicates Russia's preparedness to use artillery against inhabited areas, with minimal regard to discrimination or proportionality. This is a direct and disgraceful manifestation of the failure of the Russian military leadership. It is a shameful display of doubling down on failure, anger, dishonesty and scapegoating by the Russian general staff. Throughout the Russian forces' operation and across all domains their commanders' failures to conduct appropriate operational planning has been nothing but a betrayal of their soldiers, sailors and airmen who have paid the price with their lives – poorly equipped, poorly trained and poorly led.

The Russian leadership's unprovoked, illegal, senseless, and self-defeating invasion of Ukraine; their attacks against innocent civilians and their homes; and their widespread atrocities, including the deliberate targeting of women and children, corrupt the memory of past sacrifices and Russia's once-proud global reputation. They are not the actions of a great power. They are reprehensible and cowardly.

All those carrying out war crimes should know they cannot act with impunity. Indiscriminate attacks against innocent civilians amount to war crimes, for which those who are complicit must be held accountable.

Mr. Chairperson,

We have been clear that normal business cannot resume whilst Putin wages his horrific and barbaric war of choice on our Ukrainian friends. And we again condemn in the strongest possible words Belarus' ongoing support for Russia's war of aggression on Ukraine, including permitting the use of its territory by Russia to launch the barbaric attacks against the Ukrainian people.

Last week we expressed our utmost concern regarding the ongoing combat readiness check or so-called "snap exercise" and the lack of necessary transparency surrounding it. As part of this exercise, we also noted the announcement that Belarus was deploying units from the "special operations forces" to the Ukrainian border in response to the presence of Ukrainian armed forces deployed there. We also highlighted the absurdity of the Belarusian suggestion that it was Ukraine that posed a threat to Belarus along the same border area that Belarus allowed Russia to launch its ill-fated advance on Kyiv.

Whilst we recognize that, to date, Belarusian forces have not been directly involved in the conflict, we would observe that the presence of Belarusian forces near the Ukrainian

border will likely fix Ukrainian troops in place, so they cannot deploy in support of operations in the Donbas.

Mr. Chairperson,

Our primary focus remains to work – for however long it takes – to ensure that the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and the independence of Ukraine is restored. The United Kingdom stands in solidarity with our Ukrainian friends, including through the ongoing provision of military assistance, as they defend their homeland and fight for the simple right to a free, peaceful and prosperous future.

Thank you. And I ask that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.