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**STATEMENT BY
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RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS ON MILITARY
SECURITY AND ARMS CONTROL, AT THE 1065th PLENARY MEETING OF
THE OSCE FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION**

13 December 2023

Agenda item: Closing session of the Canadian FSC Chairmanship

Madam Chairperson,

As the present round of negotiations comes to its conclusion, we should also like to share our impressions of the work of this autonomous OSCE decision-making body in 2023, taking account of the security situation.

Conscious of the strengthening of the Russian Federation as one of the leading centres of development in the modern world and considering its independent foreign policy to be a threat to Western hegemony, the United States of America and its satellites have used the measures taken by our country as regards Ukraine to protect Russian vital interests as a pretext for unleashing a new type of hybrid war aimed at weakening Russia in every possible way.

The year now drawing to its close has shown that these efforts have failed.

Contrary to the expectations of those who instigated them, the illegal Western restrictions, which run counter to the Charter of the United Nations, have not diminished the Russian Federation's geopolitical influence. Quite the opposite in fact: the great adaptability of our economy and of our multi-ethnic people have made it possible to achieve economic growth, surpassing that of leading EU countries.

The consolidated efforts of the United States, the European Union and NATO to drive Russia into political isolation have proved unsuccessful. Our country continues to accumulate constructive energy for the expansion of mutually beneficial co-operation with independent players on all continents. Next year Russia will chair the Commonwealth of Independent States, the members of which are our closest partners. We shall also be getting ready to chair the BRICS group. We will pay particular attention to working with our colleagues from the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, which has become the institutional pillar of "Greater Eurasia".

Against this backdrop, the United States and its satellites continue to generate security threats on our western borders. The aggressive nature of their policy has ceased to be veiled behind phrases about the

exclusively defensive thrust of their military doctrines. In the doctrinal approaches of NATO States at the national and coalition level one may observe growing pretensions to global and regional domination, which it is planned to achieve through the use of military force.

Remarks are already to be heard to the effect that, given the significant destruction suffered by Ukraine's network of airfields, the F-16 tactical fighter jets being handed over to the Ukrainian armed forces could fly sorties from air bases in Poland, Romania and Slovakia. We strongly warn that the deployment of these fighter jets from the territory of the aforementioned NATO member countries will be regarded by the Russian Government as tantamount to their participating in the conflict in Ukraine and will compel Russia to take measures in response.

Things have got to a point where the topic of confrontation between the armies of two nuclear powers is being overtly played on in the United States. Is this how international security, in your view, is meant to be ensured?

At the same time, in the West it is becoming increasingly complicated to justify to taxpayers and sober-minded political forces the astronomic amounts being spent on "containing" Russia. This also concerns the situation in and around Ukraine, which was the focus of the work of the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) this year.

Sensible politicians in Europe and international observers unanimously confirm what the Russian delegation has been regularly saying at the Forum – namely, that despite the massive external support, the Ukrainian armed forces' counteroffensive has collapsed. The full-on involvement of EU and NATO countries in the events in Ukraine has not brought the Kyiv regime the results that it desired, serving instead merely to enrich the US military-industrial complex. As Russian President Vladimir Putin has said, Ukraine does not have "its own base", "its own ideology, industry or money", which means it has "no future". This is a consequence of the bloodshed provoked by the West ten years ago and, subsequently, of the Ukrainian Government's refusal to negotiate, which was imposed on them by their "Anglo-Saxon" handlers. But when these Western puppeteers come to from their "war fever", they must understand that a comprehensive settlement of the conflict over Ukraine depends on the elimination of its root causes.

Madam Chairperson,

The turbulent geopolitical situation in Europe is leaving a serious mark on the work of the FSC. The unsatisfactory state of affairs at the Forum is a result of the United States, NATO and the European Union coalescing around a position of confrontation with our country.

These tendencies manifested themselves particularly clearly in the activities of the pro-NATO Chairmanships of Bulgaria and Canada, which flouted their direct obligations. Instead of helping the FSC to function and instead of enabling all the participating States to take part in it effectively, they contributed to a politicization of the discussion. In the case of the Canadian Chairmanship this went on even after we had used bilateral channels to unambiguously make our position known regarding the inadmissibility of replacing the mandate of the Forum, which comprises 57 States with equal rights, with the narrow political agenda of a number of countries and military blocs.

As we see it, this is a manifestation of Western countries' consolidated stance regarding the Forum, the priority for these countries being to wage an information war against Russia. A case in point is the way that representatives of Poland and the Kyiv regime blocked our documentary video material on the origins of the crisis in Ukraine from being shown. That can only be described as an unacceptable act of political censorship on the part of those who have run out of substantive counter-arguments.

The pernicious course of undermining normal operations in line with OSCE commitments took its toll on the joint meetings of the FSC and the Permanent Council. Going forward, we will resist attempts to put topics on the agenda of such meetings that are irrelevant to the Forum or that do not fall under the purview of both OSCE bodies.

During this round, given the refusal to listen to us and to take legitimate Russian interests into account, we were compelled to block the convening of two plenary meetings – one dealing with information security (a topic that by its nature ought to be discussed by experts in the Security Committee), and in the other case as a result of Canada’s refusal to invite Ambassador-at-Large Rodion Miroshnik from the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to speak as a panellist on the topic of international humanitarian law.

We met with unfounded criticism of these actions. However, have our Western colleagues stopped to think about what kind of impression is being made by their obstructionist policy of derailing – for the second successive year, to boot – all politico-military events in the OSCE’s annual cycle?

Incidentally, after the Yugoslavian crisis of 1999, which sent shock waves through Europe, the work in the OSCE’s politico-military dimension was not impaired in the least. We did not refuse to co-operate. On the contrary, we made such co-operation a priority for rectifying the European security situation. Even though we were back then categorically not satisfied with, among other things, the reaction of the United States and its satellites to the activation of the risk reduction mechanism under the Vienna Document in connection with their large-scale “unusual military activities”. Well, historical hindsight makes it clear who has what priorities.

If, in the long run, our Western interlocutors are interested in seeing the FSC return to normal operation, then they must restore inclusive dialogue in accordance with the Forum’s mandate, observe the consensus rule and strictly adhere to the Rules of Procedure. We are prepared to engage in such work based on the principle of reciprocity. However, attempts at deliberately further stirring up confrontation towards Russia at the FSC – by, *inter alia*, preventing our representatives from taking part in major OSCE events and by exerting pressure by means of provocations – could have regrettable consequences and will not be left unanswered.

In closing, we should like to note the efforts undertaken by the delegations of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria and Canada to maintain the functioning of the FSC in challenging times. We trust that the new Troika of FSC Chairmanships, that is, Cyprus, Croatia and Denmark, will be able to make a constructive contribution to strengthening the Forum’s foundations in 2024. We call upon them to take a responsible approach to the fulfilment of their duties. It is important to rid the Forum of politicization and actions that are incompatible with diplomatic practice.

Thank you for your attention.