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Delegation of the Russian Federation

**FORMAL RESERVATION BY
THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AT THE 1458th (SPECIAL) MEETING OF
THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

26 January 2024

Madam Chairperson,

It is extremely disappointing that the Maltese Chairmanship has decided to start its work in 2024 with a demonstrative and flagrant violation of the Rules of Procedure of the OSCE. The convening of any Permanent Council meeting must be fully in line with these Rules as regards consultations with all the participating States (paragraphs IV.1(C)1 and IV.1(C)3) and may not contravene the provisions of the mandate of the Chairmanship-in-Office, which unambiguously obligates the Chairmanship to take the whole spectrum of opinions into account in its actions (Porto Ministerial Council Decision No. 8 of 2002). We said this clearly yesterday in the presence of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Malta Ian Borg. In spite of that, there was no proper discussion of the question of convening today's special meeting of the Permanent Council.

Furthermore, the agenda circulated by the Chairmanship for today's meeting is blatantly confrontational and does not give all participating States the opportunity for equal and non-discriminatory participation in the discussion of events in and around Ukraine. This was evidently done in order to force States to speak on the same issue under different agenda items.

Not to mention the fact that the meeting agenda was circulated hastily, without the traditional preliminary letter in such cases from the Chairperson of the Permanent Council inviting participation in a special meeting of an OSCE decision-making body, and also indicating the reasons for its convening and which participating State was behind the initiative to organize such a meeting.

We firmly reject the logic of the Chairmanship, whose actions today can in no way be described as balanced and transparent.

In fact, there is an abuse of authority on the part of the Chairmanship, which has decided to promote the line of a certain group of countries aimed at increasing confrontation instead of creating conditions for equitable dialogue and searching for ways out of crisis and conflict situations.

It should be obvious to everyone that "an OSCE that is not for everyone" will not succeed. In fact, this is evidenced by the number of participating States deciding to attend today's hastily convened meeting. Attempts to turn the work of the decision-making bodies into a "gathering of States with similar interests" are a disastrous tactic for the entire Organization, since such a format does not provide any bridges for dialogue. It is clearly the wrong path and one that will lead nowhere.

In view of the inability of the Maltese Chairmanship to organize a balanced discussion within this decision-making body in accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the OSCE, we have no choice but to refrain from taking part in today's special meeting of the Permanent Council.

We will give detailed consideration to developments in the zone of the Russian special operation at the next regular meeting of the Permanent Council.

We request that this formal reservation be reflected in the journal of today's special meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council in accordance with paragraph IV.1(A)6 of the Rules of Procedure of the OSCE.

Thank you for your attention.