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Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY  
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FEDERATION TO THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS ON MILITARY SECURITY  
AND ARMS CONTROL, AT THE 1064th PLENARY MEETING OF THE  
OSCE FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION**

6 December 2023

**Agenda item: General statements**

**Subject: On the origins of the crisis in Ukraine and the role of Western countries**

Madam Chairperson,

The Euromaidan events in Kyiv began exactly ten years ago on 21 November. At almost every meeting of the Forum since then, we have heard the mantra of how the Ukrainian people are suffering as a result of “unprovoked Russian aggression”. At the same time, no one remembers the true causes of the events of the past few years, and Russia is baselessly and automatically blamed for everything.

Yes, it is true that ordinary citizens are suffering from the unending crisis in Ukraine. However, they are being made to suffer by the regime in Kyiv, which, having been illegally instated by the West, immediately threw off its mask and demonstrated its neo-Nazi essence.

Yes, it is true that some of the Ukrainian people have been living under relentless shelling for eight years. But Western States have always turned a blind eye to this. Do they not count as humans? And what about the dead children of Donbas, to whom a monument has been erected on the Alley of Angels in Donetsk? Do their lives mean nothing to you?

Among those who speak the loudest here about “violations of international law” are the countries of the European Union and NATO, which are supplying weapons and combatants to Ukraine in violation of their very own obligations and guidelines.

Western States talk about disinformation and free speech. But it was they who took the arbitrary decision to close down all sources of alternative information and all Russian media in the European Union. And it is those very countries that have been silent for years about the existence of the Ukrainian Nazi website Myrotvorets, through which those who disagree with the policies of the Kyiv regime are persecuted, even with a view to their physical extermination. Among them are journalists, diplomats and even children.

We should like to inform the representative of the United States of America, who has made irritating insinuations about the Russian army, that the personnel strength of the armed forces of the Russian

Federation is being gradually increased through the enrolment of citizens who express the desire to perform military service under contract. There are no plans in that connection for a significant stepping up of conscription of citizens for compulsory military service, and no mobilization is envisaged.

The personnel strength of the armed forces is being augmented because of the growing threats to our country associated with the special military operation and the continuing expansion of NATO. The Alliance is building up its joint military capabilities close to Russia's borders and deploying additional air defence systems and strike weapons. The potential of NATO's tactical nuclear forces is being strengthened. The United States is aiming to replace 200 obsolete free-fall nuclear bombs located in Europe and Turkey with a new high-precision version by the end of 2025. In the current circumstances, the additional build-up of the combat and numerical strength of the armed forces of the Russian Federation is an appropriate response to the aggressive activity of the NATO bloc.

We categorically reject the outrageous remarks by the delegation of Ukraine, which grossly distorted the substance of the statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Sergey Lavrov, at the OSCE Ministerial Council meeting held in Skopje on 30 November and 1 December this year. Our country has never refused to engage in diplomacy. Russia's decision to launch a special military operation was dictated by the fact that the level of security threats on our borders, generated, among others, by our two nuclear adversaries, the United States and the United Kingdom, had reached new heights. In that context, it is worth recalling the construction by the United Kingdom of a naval base in the Ukrainian port city of Ochakiv, and NATO's anti-Russian "Exercise Sea Breeze" in the summer of 2021, which concluded with the reckless behaviour of the British destroyer HMS *Defender*. In addition, the US Air Force used the airspace over Ukrainian territory for familiarization flights by American B-52 nuclear-capable heavy strategic bombers, which had supposedly been removed from accountability under the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty. This proves that the threat to Russia's security from the military assimilation of Ukrainian territory by the North Atlantic Alliance countries was critical and comparable to that experienced by the United States itself during the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962.

As for the Russian Federation, we have pursued and continue to pursue an independent, consistent and principled foreign policy. We are open to constructive partnership with all States without exception and reject bloc confrontation or any measures that run counter to the Charter of the United Nations. However, our colleagues stick to entrenched approaches, openly refusing for decades to abide by the principles of equal rights and mutual consideration of interests in their relations with us. And here let me give you one quote: "It could have been foreseen long ago that this rabid hatred, like a dog's hatred of a leash – a hatred that year in, year out, for thirty years has been fanned more and more in the West against Russia – would one day break loose from its chain. That moment has now come. What was officially called Russia, whatever it did to try to avert its fatal destiny – whether cringing, bargaining, hiding its flag, even denying itself – nothing helped. For the day came when an even more stark proof of its restraint was demanded, when Russia was quite simply invited to commit suicide, to forswear the very foundation of its existence, to solemnly acknowledge that its only role in the world was that of a wild and grotesque phenomenon, an aberration needing to be put right." These are words penned in 1874 by the Russian poet and diplomat Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev. Unfortunately, the West's approach to building relations with its neighbours has not changed since then.

It is evident that the assembled audience needs to be regularly reminded of the cause-and-effect relationships underpinning the events of the past. With that in mind, the Russian delegation has prepared a video on the origins of the crisis in Ukraine, which is much shorter than the length of a standard statement from us. We would urge colleagues to be patient and respectful, allowing those who are actually interested – and there are some in this room – to see the documentary evidence through to the end. Seeing is believing, as the saying goes.

The video is available at the link:  
[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Hr04g51HmhoVoxjtAJR6dtwbI\\_sp9r2R/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Hr04g51HmhoVoxjtAJR6dtwbI_sp9r2R/view)

Thank you for your attention.