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**STATEMENT BY
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RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS ON MILITARY
SECURITY AND ARMS CONTROL, AT THE 1034th PLENARY MEETING
OF THE OSCE FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION**

1 February 2023

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

Mr. Chairperson,

The United States of America and member countries of the North Atlantic Alliance are making every effort to prolong and escalate the conflict in Ukraine. The US Government is openly claiming that the Ukrainians are preparing offensive operations, including against Crimea. This is a departure from previous rhetoric, which emphasized that the weapons sent to Ukraine were for purely defensive purposes and stressed the reluctance of the United States to be drawn into a direct confrontation with Russia. Six months ago, US President Joe Biden said that sending tanks to Ukraine would mark a step towards inevitable escalation. For his administration, the decision on tanks is now already a thing of the past, and NATO is discussing sending combat aircraft to the Kyiv regime. But neither tanks nor planes will help Ukraine.

It is the trademark of the collective West to mislead the international community while pretending that NATO member countries have ultimate authority. There is no need to list all the examples of NATO double standards. Let me just remind you that Alliance countries are supposedly arming Ukraine to achieve peace and declare the need for a political settlement, but in reality they are telling the authorities in Kyiv not to restart the negotiation process. They assure us they have no intention of supplying tanks and aircraft to Ukraine and then change their minds overnight. We have no illusions regarding the further strategy of the Kyiv regime's handlers on the other side of the ocean, as all the signs point to their intention to put the crisis in the OSCE area to their personal gain, with others doing the work for them. Once again we are reminded that the West cannot be trusted.

At the behest of the US Government, Germany has become the main hub for concentrating practical efforts by the collective West to continue the fighting in Ukraine. The US European Command is stationed on its territory, along with the US Army Europe and Africa Command, which has overall responsibility for co-ordinating the training of Ukrainian troops and the transport of Western military equipment to Kyiv. As Russian President Vladimir Putin stressed, "formally and legally there are US occupation troops in Germany". Not surprisingly, its Minister for Foreign Affairs, Annalena Baerbock, an environmentalist, has been clear and unequivocal about the "West's war against Russia".

The deal between Germany and the United States imposed on Berlin to supply tanks to Ukraine is highly illustrative in that context. When Abrams battle tanks will be manufactured and sent to the “Eastern front” has not yet been determined. But German-made Leopards will lead a “Ukrainian-NATO campaign” against Russian citizens in as little as a month’s time. We can assure you that our country has a successful track record of hunting these “iron beasts”.

We should like to appeal to our German colleagues: do not paint over the white crosses on the armour of your tanks; they will inspire our soldiers to new military exploits. The decision by the German Government is indicative of Germany’s definitive refusal to acknowledge its historical responsibility to our people for the terrible crimes of Nazism during the Great Patriotic War, crimes which have no statute of limitations. If Leopard 2A6 tanks come into the sights of the Russian army, they will be destroyed just as German tanks were 80 years ago. We trust that the Western OSCE participating States have not forgotten how things ended back then.

The “arms diplomacy” promoted by the United States in favour of Ukraine has already had a very negative impact on the security of Europe. It is detrimental both to the global economy and directly to the prosperity of the European Union, because of the need for countries in the region to increase their defence budgets. At the same time, by seizing military equipment from their allies and sending it to the Ukrainian theatre of hostilities for recycling, the United States is forcing multibillion-dollar contracts on Europeans for the purchase of its military hardware. Last year alone, the US military-industrial complex almost doubled its profits. Against this background, the armies and economies of European countries are being bled dry. The United Kingdom has been described by its US allies as just “barely making it to the second tier of military powers”.

The entire civilized world, including the countries of Latin America, is aware of the harmfulness of pumping weapons into Ukraine.

It is also telling that the taxpayers of EU and NATO States, unlike their governments, have not yet completely lost their historical memory and are aware of the enormous risks of direct Western involvement in the conflict in Ukraine. According to a poll by the German magazine *Der Spiegel*, 63 per cent of German citizens oppose the delivery of fighter jets to Ukraine. The newspaper *La Stampa* confirmed that 52 per cent of Italians disapprove of new Western arms being sent to Ukraine. So do French citizens, who yesterday organized a protest against the supply of Caesar self-propelled artillery systems to kill residents of Donbas. But will European politicians who serve the US doctrinal agenda of strategic damage to Russia listen to their constituents?

Since March 2022, there has been a fourfold increase in civilian casualties and a threefold rise in the destruction of civilian objects as a result of the use of NATO-style weapons and ammunition by the Ukrainian armed forces in Russian Donbas. The images we show every week at the Hofburg are just a drop in the ocean.

On 28 January this year, the Ukrainian armed forces committed another serious war crime in violation of Article 18 of the 1949 Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War. A US-made HIMARS multiple-launch rocket system hit a hospital in Novoaidar in the Luhansk People’s Republic, killing 14 people and injuring a further 24. On the same day, a Ukrainian armed forces shell hit a hospital in Nova Kakhovka in the Kherson region. The lack of response from the United States and other NATO countries to this monstrous violation of international humanitarian law by Ukraine once again confirms their direct complicity in the crimes being committed.

But the Kyiv regime's NATO handlers do not want to stop. It has become known that, at the Munich Security Conference (to be held from 17 to 19 February this year), there are plans for an agreement to be signed between the German arms corporation Rheinmetall and the US company Lockheed Martin to start production of HIMARS multiple-launch rocket systems in Germany, also in order to meet Ukrainian demand. This means only one thing: the Ukrainian-NATO killing machine will continue shelling civilian hospitals established to help the injured and the sick, people with disabilities and women in labour, which the 1949 Geneva Convention prohibits from being targeted.

The ongoing international lawlessness of the collective West and its aggressive anti-Russian actions confirm that the Russian Federation's historic decision to launch a special military operation to demilitarize and denazify Ukraine is justified. We pay tribute to the brave people of Donbas, who have been resisting the Kyiv junta and its Western handlers for almost nine years. Russian troops are taking all measures to ensure that the West's plans in Ukraine do not come to fruition, and they will not.

Last week, the armed forces of the Russian Federation launched a massive missile attack on Ukraine's transport system and defence industry. As a result, the transfer of weapons and ammunition to the combat zone was disrupted, as was the operation of production facilities for repairing and restoring the military equipment of the Ukrainian armed forces. Over 80 Ukrainian armed forces units in firing positions, along with personnel and military equipment in more than 100 areas, were hit. High-precision strikes took out 13 M777 artillery systems, four Paladin self-propelled artillery systems and at least 11 US-made AN/TPQ counter-battery radar systems. Six German-made Panzerhaubitze 2000 self-propelled howitzers, a French-made Caesar self-propelled artillery system and a Polish-made Krab howitzer were destroyed.

The systematic work to destroy NATO military equipment in the area of the special military operation will be continued, and we shall continue to report on its results at the Forum for Security Co-operation.

In conclusion, a few words about how peaceful Ukrainians are being used as expendable material in the West's war against everything Russian.

We well remember Ukrainian Minister of Defence Oleksii Reznikov's statement that by engaging in conflict with Russia, the Ukrainian armed forces are carrying out NATO's mission, in which Ukrainians are shedding their blood for the Alliance. It was stated explicitly that Ukraine was serving NATO interests by killing its own citizens. But as it turns out, this line is not new. The Russian Ministry of Defence has received documents confirming the Pentagon's intention to make biological weapons components and test them on the Ukrainian population, including military personnel. We are talking about the fact that Ukrainian officials, following orders from the US Government, conducted experiments on Ukrainian armed forces soldiers whose blood contained high concentrations of antibiotics, drugs and antibodies to pathogens of specific infectious diseases.

Now, carrying out criminal orders from the United States to launch a new bloody counteroffensive, the Ukrainian authorities are turning to ever more brutal methods of forced nationwide mobilization. They are going as far as to use physical force. Conscription orders are being handed out everywhere – even in air raid shelters during attacks, under the guise of ambulance crews. The misuse of medical service vehicles for mobilization in Odessa has been confirmed by the commander of the Ukrainian armed forces' Operational Command South, Andrii Kovalchuk. The videos disseminated in the public domain clearly show that the unity of the Ukrainian nation in the face of the "aggressor", as proclaimed by the Kyiv leadership, ends where the need to defend the interests of Western handlers on the battlefield begins.

One further point. Victoria Nuland, the architect of the 2014 anti-constitutional coup d'état in Kyiv and now US Under Secretary of State, said recently that Ukraine needed to determine for itself what "victory" would mean for it. It would be advisable to decide sooner rather than later. We are ready to work for our victory by all available means and for as long as it takes to realize the goals of the special military operation set by the President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin, to achieve peace and prosperity for Russian citizens in our historical territories.

Thank you for your attention.