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**STATEMENT BY  
MR. DMITRY POLYANSKIY, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE  
RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1560th MEETING OF THE  
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

16 April 2026

**On the ongoing attempts by some OSCE participating States to undermine efforts at finding a long-term and sustainable peaceful solution to the Ukrainian crisis**

Mr. Chairperson,

As I mentioned earlier, in the three weeks since our last meeting, nothing of any fundamental significance has changed regarding the conflict in Ukraine. The overwhelming majority of Ukrainians do not want to fight, but the Kyiv regime and its handlers remain determined to continue the war. For Zelenskyy and his regime, this is a matter of survival, as the end of the war would force them to hold elections, which would mean relinquishing power and ultimately being held accountable for all the crimes committed against their fellow citizens.

Europe, which is closely “tied” to Zelenskyy and his accomplices, has no interest in such a scenario either and is using Ukraine as a military battering ram against Russia, as a tool to weaken it. European capitals do not care about the fate of ordinary Ukrainians; in Europe, they have long since been sacrificed on the altar of the geopolitical confrontation with Russia, and the authorities in London, Paris, Berlin and Brussels could not care less how many of them ultimately survive. To complete the picture, add to this the hypocritical European rhetoric about fighting alongside the Ukrainians for certain shared values and democratic ideals which, judging by what is happening in Ukraine, amount to the glorification of Nazi criminals, the deprivation of citizens’ freedom of speech and religion, and the most severe discrimination on the grounds of nationality and language.

Today, I should like to focus in particular on the latter – namely, the gross violation of the rights of the Russian and Russian-speaking population by the Kyiv regime, in the absence of any response from Europe, and at times even with its support.

At present, Ukraine is the only country in the world where the use of the Russian language is prohibited by law. This applies, among other things, to education, culture, science and the media. The Kyiv regime has literally trampled underfoot its own constitutional obligations to ensure equality before the law for all citizens of Ukraine, regardless of their race, nationality, education, language, political views or religious beliefs. Fines have been introduced for natural persons and legal entities for using the Russian

language. There are calls for these fines to be increased significantly. A Russophobic and humanity-hating ideology prevails.

Let us cite just a couple of recent high-profile examples. Olha Stefanishyna, the former Deputy Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration and current Ambassador of Ukraine to the United States of America, stated that “there is no Russian minority” in Ukraine. If one were to interpret her words to mean that Russians make up the majority of Ukraine’s population, one might well agree with that view; however, by making such assessments, the Kyiv camarilla is denying Russians and Russian speakers the right to exist. And now the Speaker of the Ukrainian Parliament, Ruslan Stefanchuk, is claiming that the rights of the Russian people “should be curtailed”. The Ukrainian media is literally rife with Russophobic and Nazi rhetoric, with hatred directed not only at adults but also at children. Let us single out Larysa Nitsoi, a so-called children’s author and activist who regularly appears on television; in January, for example, she claimed that Ukraine’s Russian-speaking population ought to “shut their mouths” and stop speaking their native language.

In their Russophobic frenzy, nationalists have submitted a draft law to the Verkhovna Rada (Ukrainian Parliament) proposing a ban on the Russian language in private educational institutions. This constitutes a gross violation of Ukraine’s international obligations and its own legislation, and runs counter to the relevant recommendations of the Council of Europe’s Venice Commission.

In March, it was reported in the Ukrainian media that, in a number of schools in the Peresyp district of Odessa, some kind of “inspectors” had begun rummaging through teachers’ personal belongings and checking their mobile phones, including when the owners were not present. They were interested in knowing what language the teachers were using when communicating with parents in group chats. In late March this year, a professor at the Odessa National University of Technology was dismissed for using the Russian language during an exam.

It is worth noting that, even under the current strict language diktats, almost half of Ukraine’s citizens are not afraid to admit that they speak Russian in their private lives. In reality, though, the proportion of Russian-speaking residents in the country exceeds 80 per cent. Even Olena Ivanovska, Ukraine’s State Language Protection Commissioner, noted with displeasure that in Kyiv’s schools 66 per cent of pupils speak Russian in lessons and 82 per cent during break times.

Nevertheless, Ukrainians face harassment for using Russian in public places. A telling example of this is the witch-hunt against Denis Miroschnychenko, captain of the football club Karpaty Lviv, who was stripped of his captain’s armband, or Olympic champion Yaroslava Mahuchikh, who was subjected to harassment on social media for speaking Russian in her private life. Those who listen to Russian-language music considered “undesirable” by Ukrainian nationalists are also being targeted. Has there been any reaction to all these egregious facts from European capitals or human rights organizations? No! As soon as the subject turns to Russians or Russian speakers, Europe makes it clear that anything goes when it comes to them. In its day, the Third Reich promoted a similar attitude towards all Slavs; today, its successors in the European Union have narrowed this down to Russians and Russian speakers.

Just now, my Canadian colleague was lamenting the fact that Russia is allegedly trying to erase Ukrainian identity, even though there has never been any evidence to support this. She asked whether anyone in this room would accept these conditions. But would you accept the following conditions? If someone were to go through your phone and find messages in French, or fine you for listening to French music? Against this backdrop, the large-scale persecution of the canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church carries on: Orthodox churches are being seized and destroyed, holy sites desecrated, and worshippers and clergy prosecuted on politically motivated criminal charges and subjected to violence and torture.

For example, in late January this year, the nuns of the Buturinsky Krupitsky St. Nicholas Convent were evicted from their cells, literally left out in the cold, while the doors to the church and the residential building were sealed. In early March this year, in the village of Komariv in the Chernivtsi region, the Assumption Church of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church was seized and handed over to the schismatic Orthodox Church of Ukraine with the support of the Ukrainian security forces. The Zelenskyy regime is continuing its attempts to establish control over the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra, a site sacred to all Orthodox Christians and a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

You can find more detailed information on these and other documented instances of persecution against the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the relevant reports by the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which we have circulated at the OSCE. We particularly recommend that representatives of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights read them carefully.

Our premise is that the principle of non-discrimination on religious grounds is universal. In responding to crimes committed against members of one religious denomination, the international community cannot ignore systematic violations of religious freedom affecting other denominations.

Mr. Chairperson,

Having been somewhat taken aback by the prospect of resolving the Ukrainian conflict at the negotiating table – a prospect that emerged last year thanks to the efforts of US and Russian negotiators – the European sponsors of the Kyiv regime have regained their composure and are becoming increasingly involved in providing it with armed support, thereby undermining any peace initiatives. Recently, we have become increasingly convinced that NATO's proxy war with Russia, waged using the Ukrainians as a cat's paw, is gradually starting to show signs of the Alliance's direct involvement in the conflict. At our previous meeting, we discussed evidence that the Baltic States are providing their airspace for Ukrainian drones flying to targets in Russia. A week ago, it was reported in the media that a group of 50 Ukrainian military personnel had arrived in Norway to practise the use of unmanned underwater vehicles and unmanned surface vehicles in Arctic conditions in the Norwegian Sea. Today, I should like to share with you the information that, on 26 March, against a backdrop of mounting losses and a worsening shortage of manpower within the Ukrainian armed forces, the leaders of a number of European countries decided to ramp up the production and supply of unmanned aerial vehicles to Ukraine for strikes on Russian territory.

Their motives are clear, as no matter what the head of the Kyiv regime may claim about supposedly groundbreaking Ukrainian developments and solutions, the survival of Ukraine's military-industrial complex depends entirely on foreign supplies. This was effectively confirmed recently by the Head of the Office of the President of Ukraine, Kyrylo Budanov, who admitted that a significant proportion of Ukrainian drones and other military developments are built using imported components, foreign equipment and external technological solutions.

In other words, the Ukrainians are fighting almost exclusively with equipment supplied by Europe. And so now, to prevent its protégés from losing (or at least from losing quickly), Europe has today adopted the tactic of establishing "Ukrainian" enterprises for the production of drones and their components on the territory of EU Member States. Yesterday, the Russian Ministry of Defence published a list of such enterprises located in Czechia, Denmark, Germany, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain and the United Kingdom, as well as in Israel and Türkiye; we are aware of their addresses and co-ordinates. Colleagues, I do not think I need to explain to you the dangers of such activities in support of the Kyiv regime, activities that effectively turn your countries into Ukraine's strategic rear.

We are forced to come to the conclusion that this is a deliberate move by the States in question towards a dramatic escalation of the politico-military situation across the entire European continent. In other words, such actions are inevitably and rapidly dragging the aforementioned States into a war with Russia. I would like the relevant capitals to give some thought to the consequences of these reckless actions, while they still have the opportunity to reverse course.

Thank you for your attention.