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Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY
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RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS ON MILITARY
SECURITY AND ARMS CONTROL, AT THE 1137th PLENARY MEETING OF
THE OSCE FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION**

20 May 2026

**Agenda item: Security Dialogue
Subject: OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security**

Mr. Chairperson,

We are grateful for the convening of a Security Dialogue dealing with responsible compliance with the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security. At the same time, we deeply regret that the Chairmanship failed to undertake the necessary preparatory work with the panellists, some of whom allowed themselves to indulge in hostile, undiplomatic rhetoric from the podium of the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC). That is utterly unacceptable. We call upon you, Mr. Chairperson, to approach the task of organizing Security Dialogues with a sense of responsibility in the interests of all 57 participating States without exception.

This meeting provides us with an opportunity to share our assessments and try to identify the root causes of the current highly challenging security situation in the OSCE area.

What, then, is occurring at present? Our discussions are taking place amid an all-out hybrid war against Russia initiated by the collective West. And the huge gap between the provisions of the Code of Conduct and reality is becoming increasingly apparent. In a number of cases, we can find nothing at all in common between the commitments set out in that document and the all too real actions of Western countries aimed at undermining the international legal order.

Thus, for more than three decades now, we have been seeing how some of the OSCE participating States that are members of the North Atlantic Alliance have chosen an alternative path when it comes to strengthening their security. In this case, we are dealing with a flagrant example of its being strengthened very much at the expense of the security of other OSCE participating States, and to the detriment not only of their security but also of universal security. Today, as in the Cold War era, the bloc's military build-up is geared towards "deterrence" of, and confrontation with, Russia across all geographical fronts and in all operational environments. The Alliance is steadily preparing for a real, high-intensity conflict in the East within the next three to five years. Against this backdrop, NATO's "eastern" flank is being reinforced and infrastructure upgraded so that forces and equipment can be deployed right next to our borders; the military

capabilities of Finland and Sweden are being thoroughly integrated; attempts are being made to turn the Baltic into an “inland sea” of the North Atlantic bloc; and the activity of NATO aircraft along the western frontiers of Russia is steadily increasing. We also have in mind how the so-called nuclear deterrent of the United Kingdom and France is being extended to non-nuclear-weapon States in Europe. As for the Ukrainian conflict, that is being used by Western countries solely to buy time.

Through their actions, the member States of the North Atlantic bloc have trampled underfoot the fundamental principle of common and indivisible security in the OSCE area, as enshrined in paragraph 3 of the Code of Conduct. NATO’s actions in the international arena also violate another pillar of the Code, namely paragraph 13, which lays down that “no participating State will attempt to impose military domination over any other participating State.”

We once again have this reasonable question to ask: how can such bellicose activity by NATO and the European Union, which is not conducive to strengthening security and stability in the region, be squared with the Code of Conduct and other OSCE documents that talk about a common security space, about co-operation and about the need to take each other’s legitimate interests into account? How can it be squared, in particular, with the principle enshrined in paragraph 4 of the Code whereby “the participating States will base their mutual security relations upon a co-operative approach”?

We would also be curious to know in what way Western countries, as they provide the Kyiv regime with money, weapons and intelligence and participate in the planning of terrorist acts committed on Russian territory by the Ukrainian armed forces and the Security Service of Ukraine, can be said to be adhering to the principles set out in paragraph 6 (“The participating States will not support terrorist acts in any way and will take appropriate measures to prevent and combat terrorism in all its forms”).

We are referring here to the terrorist attacks on the Crimean Bridge in 2022 and 2023; the assassination of Darya Dugina in 2022, Vladlen Tatarsky in 2023, Lieutenant General Igor Kirillov in 2024 and Lieutenant General Yaroslav Moskalik in 2025; the destruction of the Kakhovka hydroelectric power station in 2023; an attempted strike on the Kremlin in 2023 involving unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs); the use of multiple-launch rocket systems to fire ATACMS missiles equipped with cluster warheads at a beach in Sevastopol in 2024; the terrorist acts committed by the Ukrainian armed forces in the Kursk region in 2024 and 2025; the blowing up of railway tracks in the Bryansk and Kursk regions in 2025, which led to the derailing of passenger trains. Likewise, the latest raid by Ukrainian UAVs on the Moscow region during the night of 16 to 17 May is nothing less than a terrorist act. In all the aforementioned cases, completely innocent civilians were killed or injured.

We realize that Western representatives are unable to provide a convincing answer to these questions. As we have repeatedly seen, they prefer to pass over in silence Section I of the Code of Conduct, which covers inter-State relations, and would rather direct their attention to the Code’s domestic political aspects.

Mr. Chairperson,

Given that today the Georgian Chairmanship has invited delegations to focus on Section VII of the Code of Conduct, which deals with the observance of international humanitarian law by armed forces personnel during armed conflict, we should like to share our national best practices in this field.

The special military operation in Ukraine is being conducted in full and strict compliance with the norms of international humanitarian law, including the provisions of the Inhumane Weapons Convention and its Protocols. In the course of this operation, the armed forces of the Russian Federation are being

guided by the provisions of the 1949 Geneva Conventions, and also by the norms and principles of international humanitarian law as reflected in Russian legislation. In our country it is a given that knowledge of, and compliance with, international humanitarian law during combat operations constitute an integral part of the legal culture of a member of the armed forces. The following specific measures are taken to achieve that noble goal.

First, in accordance with Order No. 95 of the Minister of Defence of the Russian Federation from 2019, we pay the utmost attention to educating military personnel in the best Russian traditions of humane treatment of the victims of armed conflict and humane treatment of civilians. A historical approach is employed as part of the pedagogical process, with instances cited of members of the Russian armed forces fulfilling their military duty in an exemplary manner. Every year, with a view to expanding knowledge of the law of armed conflict among armed forces personnel, military lawyers are trained at the training centre of the Combined Arms Academy of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation in the town of Naro-Fominsk. An assessment exercise is regularly conducted across the armed forces in order to obtain objective information about the level of legal literacy among military personnel.

As part of their politico-military training, our officers study in depth the Internal Service Regulations of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, the Manual on International Humanitarian Law for the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, and several other documents governing the preparation and conduct of combat operations. These documents obligate members of the armed forces to “know and strictly comply with international rules for the conduct of hostilities and treatment of the wounded and sick, civilians in a combat zone and prisoners of war”. Moreover, Appendix 4 to the aforementioned Manual contains the Code of Conduct for Members of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation Participating in Combat Operations, which is intended to prevent unnecessary suffering among participants in armed conflict and civilians, minimize casualties and avoid the loss of cultural heritage and damage to the environment.

Secondly, in Russian military legal tradition and practice, a substantial proportion of obligations relating to compliance with agreements in the area of international humanitarian law devolves on military command bodies and commanders at all levels. They are in this case direct executors of the precepts of international humanitarian law. Among other things, they are required to:

- Prevent violations of the norms of international humanitarian law by their subordinates in the course of hostilities;
- Curb violations, should they be committed;
- Inform higher military authorities of violations of the norms of international humanitarian law;
- Take preventive measures to forestall violations of the norms of international humanitarian law;
- Hold those who have committed violations accountable under disciplinary rules or criminal law.

It is important to emphasize that, pursuant to the Military Regulations of the Ground Forces of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, a decision by the commander of a battalion (or company) is the basis for command and control over military units. The commander provides subordinates with instructions and clarifications on such matters as the treatment of wounded, killed or captured enemy combatants; contacts with civilians; and how to behave if captured. Furthermore, sparing civilian lives is a priority for Russian commanders, which means that, in strict compliance with the norms of international humanitarian law, it is solely the enemy’s military facilities and combatants that may be treated as legitimate targets.

Thirdly, the legislation of the Russian Federation fully takes into account the provisions of international humanitarian law when it comes to accountability for serious violations thereof. The unlawful acts covered include wilful killing; inhuman treatment, including biological experiments; perfidious use of international or national emblems; and intentionally attacking particularly dangerous objects in the knowledge that such an attack will result in excessive loss of life. Moreover, in accordance with the Criminal Code, crimes involving “the use of prohibited means and methods of warfare”, “genocide” and “ecocide” have no statute of limitations.

Mr. Chairperson,

In view of what has been said, it is most disconcerting for us to hear the vile insinuations that are being churned out by the delegation of Ukraine and by several Western OSCE participating States regarding alleged “atrocities being committed by Russian troops”. They persist in operating according to the Goebbels playbook, whereby the more monstrous a lie, the more readily it is believed. However, when the true state of affairs is revealed, it is no easy task for those who have been lying to rehabilitate their international reputation.

Take, for example, the sordid insinuations by former Ukrainian Commissioner for Human Rights Liudmyla Denisova, who, incidentally, was sacked for her crude anti-Russian lies about the “raping of children”. I would remind you that Denisova, together with her daughter, also a Ukrainian public official, systematically misled the international community by spreading disinformation about “gang-rapes of teenage girls in front of their mothers” and “the raping of babies and toddlers with teaspoons or candles”. Denisova would subsequently claim that she “told these scary stories” because she “wanted victory for Ukraine”. It is evident that such “good intentions” do not get those who are guided by them very far.

Another favourite narrative in the Kyiv regime’s propaganda arsenal is Russia’s alleged destruction of Ukraine’s towns and cities. However, as a former member of the Verkhovna Rada (Ukrainian Parliament), Yegor Firsov, has acknowledged, the damage suffered by population centres is a direct consequence of a tactic chosen by the Ukrainian armed forces. This tactic involves the Ukrainian military taking people and civilian infrastructure hostage. For example, as part of the defence of Pokrovsk, Ukrainian troops are hiding behind high-rise blocks to take cover from the Russian armed forces’ artillery fire. What is more, in military terms this is being presented as a winning strategy, as opposed to a war crime against their compatriots. Western human rights organizations have already taken notice of the fact that the Ukrainian military is endangering civilians by using civilian objects, such as schools, kindergartens and hospitals, for military purposes in violation of international humanitarian law. That lie by the Kyiv regime has thus been debunked too.

Given all this, how, then, are the Ukrainian “fighters” themselves complying with the provisions of international humanitarian law?

With the West’s tacit consent, Ukrainian troops (trained by military instructors from NATO and EU member States) continue to engage in killings, acts of sabotage and terrorist attacks against the civilian population. Military equipment and fire point areas are being set up at civilian infrastructure facilities; military personnel and military goods are shuttled around in ambulances, fire engines and other vehicles of that kind. Contrary to paragraphs 30, 31 and 34 of the Code of Conduct, the number and frequency of violations of the norms and principles of international humanitarian law committed by the Kyiv regime are off the charts.

Russian military personnel taken captive by the Ukrainian armed forces are subjected to brutal torture and abuse. Graphic evidence of these crimes is regularly disseminated on Ukrainian platforms,

showing how Russian soldiers are castrated or kneecapped, how those captured wounded are finished off with a shot to the head. The bodies of those killed are publicly desecrated: they are slashed open with knives and their eyes gouged out. Anonymous posts appear on unidentified social media accounts showing the mothers of captive Russian soldiers how their sons are being abused.

This year, the delegation of the Russian Federation has circulated reports among the participating States containing testimonies of the torture suffered by Russian military personnel in Ukrainian captivity. They run to dozens of pages! However, it would seem that those present in this room have not found the time to study these reports or are pretending not to have done so.

The Ukrainian atrocities have also been confirmed by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

In March 2022, a video appeared showing Russian military personnel being abused. Some had their throats slit and were then finished off as they lay on the tarmac. Others were shot in the legs with assault rifles. All this was filmed on video by the tormentors and butchers themselves. Thugs from the Georgian Legion participated in these monstrous atrocities.

In late March 2022, Ukrainian nationalists from the Slobozhanshchina grouping shot three unarmed Russian soldiers dead.

In February 2023, three Russian servicemen lying on the ground were shot dead at point-blank range by Ukrainian neo-Nazis.

In April 2023, French mercenaries shot three Russian captives dead at point-blank range.

In July 2024, *The New York Times* ran a feature story containing revelations by foreign mercenaries who were fighting in the ranks of the Chosen Company, an outfit forming part of the Ukrainian armed forces. They spoke about the killing of unarmed and wounded Russian soldiers. By their own account, they witnessed such executions on more than one occasion. The newspaper also gained access to group chats among the soldiers from that foreign outfit in which they discuss these killings. No charges whatsoever have been filed against them whether in Ukraine or in the United States of America.

On 11 November 2022, media outlets published interviews with military personnel from the Donetsk People's Republic who had been released from captivity: they spoke of how officers from the Security Service of Ukraine would subject Russian soldiers to electric shock torture for hours on end.

Reacting to the grisly photographs and videos of captured Russian military personnel posted by the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine, *The Washington Post* wrote that this tactic "could be interpreted as a violation of the Geneva Conventions, which say governments must 'at all times' protect prisoners of war from 'insults and public curiosity'".

Such crimes are being shamefully swept under the rug by the OSCE leadership.

In the few rejoinders that they make here at the FSC, an all too familiar group of States refer to "Kremlin propaganda" or "distortion of reality", or simply claim that "photoshopping" or artificial intelligence techniques have been used.

To us it is obvious that we are dealing here not with isolated "hit jobs", but, rather, with an entire system for the supplanting of facts in the information space, a system operating for the long haul. Someone

who is genuinely deluded can be brought back to a sense of reality, but not so those who lie consciously and deliberately. The only way of countering this is through clear documentation of the facts and by bringing in witnesses. That is what our country is now systematically engaged in.

Since 2014, the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation has been investigating crimes against civilians committed by the Kyiv regime's military and political leadership, nationalists and members of the Ukrainian security apparatus. All those responsible for crimes against the civilian population of the Russian Federation will face inevitable punishment.

Mr. Chairperson,

Despite the challenging security situation in Europe, we remain convinced that there is no alternative to dialogue among the OSCE participating States when it comes to looking for ways of peaceful coexistence and ways to jointly and constructively address the problems that have accumulated. We therefore call upon Western countries to stop pushing Europe towards a major war.

We also consider it necessary to re-engage in fully fledged dialogue on the implementation of the Code of Conduct. We expect the norms enshrined therein to be put into practice in the wider international environment. In that regard, we look forward to the Georgian Chairmanship clarifying whether the Annual Discussion on the Implementation of the Code of Conduct will take place this year. Have consultations been held? What were the outcomes of these? When will the participating States be informed about them?

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.