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**STATEMENT BY
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THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1563rd MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

7 May 2026

On the unacceptability of Holocaust denial

Mr. Chairperson,

First of all, we should like to thank our colleagues from the United States of America for placing the issue of the unacceptability of Holocaust denial on the agenda of today's Permanent Council meeting. It is significant that we are discussing this in the run-up to the greatest of public holidays on 9 May – Victory Day over Nazi Germany.

The Holocaust was one of Nazism's most monstrous crimes. To deny, justify or diminish it is not merely to desecrate the memory of the millions of Jews who perished. It is to deliberately undermine the moral, ethical and legal foundations of the world order that emerged following the defeat of the Third Reich.

Unfortunately, Holocaust denial or distortion is neither an isolated phenomenon nor a mere form of historical ignorance. Rather, it is a manifestation of broader trends in which persistent attempts are made to falsify history and revise the outcome of the Second World War.

This is precisely what we are witnessing today in a number of OSCE participating States, where monuments to the liberators are being torn down. References to the role of the Red Army are disappearing from textbooks and public speeches. The memory of the war is being replaced by a politically convenient narrative whereby the Soviet Union is increasingly portrayed not as the force that broke the back of Nazism, but as an obstacle to a new version of European history. To this end, concepts are being instilled in the public consciousness that are historically utterly untenable, namely the alleged "equal responsibility of the two totalitarian regimes".

One striking example of this is the Red Army's liberation of the Nazi death camp Auschwitz-Birkenau. This fact is now increasingly being hushed up, as the liberator's name has become a source of inconvenience for the current Western establishment. Let us recall that the gates of Auschwitz were thrown open not by abstract liberators or nameless troops, but by real Soviet soldiers who arrived there after Stalingrad, Kursk, Minsk, Kyiv and Warsaw, having travelled a gruelling route that cost millions of lives.

Unfortunately, attempts are also being made to consign to oblivion the unimaginable sacrifices of the peoples of the Soviet Union. As we have repeatedly emphasized, the war against the USSR took the form of a premeditated genocide. It was the deliberate mass extermination of Soviet citizens – Russians, Ukrainians, Belarusians, Jews and other peoples of our country – with the aim of creating living space for the German members of the “master race”. Twenty-seven million people were brutally murdered, starved to death, shot, burned alive, or taken away for slave labour.

We therefore consider it unacceptable to deny not only the Holocaust, but also the genocide of the Soviet people committed by the Nazis and their accomplices. The Soviet prisoners of war, concentration camp inmates, civilians in the occupied territories, Jews, Poles, Serbs, Roma and the many others who were exterminated were all victims of the same monstrous criminal project.

Mr. Chairperson,

Contemporary Ukrainian revisionism occupies a special place within this subject. It cannot be reduced to a question of “national memory” or an internal debate about controversial figures from the past. We are referring to the systematic glorification of organizations and figures whose history is linked to radical nationalism, ethnic exclusivity, anti-Semitic propaganda and collaboration with Nazi structures.

For example, documents on the Babi Yar tragedy, published by the Russian Historical Society, recall that during the first few weeks of the occupation, groups of Ukrainian Nazi collaborators were active in the occupied territories, serving as an auxiliary occupation apparatus, taking part in punitive raids and helping to establish the local administration. Their role in the pogroms against Jews in Lviv in the summer of 1941 is documented separately.

Against this backdrop, the cult of Stepan Bandera is no innocent symbol of the “struggle for independence”. When such figures are inducted into the official pantheon of “heroes”, a falsified version of history is imposed on society, one in which the victims are erased and the executioners are exonerated. This is precisely why we reject attempts to portray Ukrainian revisionism as a mere dispute over monuments and street names. This is part of a broader process to rewrite the Second World War so that the liberator becomes the “occupier”, and the collaborator the “freedom fighter”.

This issue takes on particular significance in the run-up to Victory Day. For us, 9 May is the greatest celebration of historical justice, military valour and the lives that were saved. The day when the project that offered Europe not freedom but racial superiority, death camps, slave labour and mass extermination was finally dismantled. However much the Brussels bloc, the United Kingdom and their satellites may seek to downplay this. A telling example in this regard is the remark made on 4 June by the leader of the Kyiv regime, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, that human life is “incomparably more valuable than the ‘celebration’ of any anniversary”. And this is stated by a man who, to serve the selfish interests of a narrow group of his accomplices, sends hundreds of thousands of ordinary Ukrainians to their deaths every day.

Such remarks are nothing more than an attempt to cast doubt on the moral legitimacy of Victory Day, to portray 9 May not as a holiday marking humanity’s liberation from Nazism, but as some sort of redundant, almost cynical celebration. Drawing such a distinction is false and deeply immoral. Victory Day is a celebration of the human lives that were saved. It exists only because the USSR and the allies of the anti-Hitler coalition paid a terrible price to halt the machinery of destruction, open the gates of the death camps, and thwart the plans for the enslavement and physical extermination of entire peoples.

The particular cynicism of this rhetoric lies in the fact that by trivializing Victory Day and referring to it as “some sort of anniversary”, Zelenskyy is not only distorting history but also betraying the memory of

the millions of Ukrainians who fought in the ranks of the Red Army. In doing so, he pits “Bandera’s Ukraine” against “the Red Army’s Ukraine” – and chooses not to side with the liberators. We consider such a choice to be false and morally inadmissible. The memory of the victory belongs to all the peoples of the USSR, including the Ukrainian people. And no one – neither the current authorities in Kyiv nor their Western patrons – has the right to deprive Ukrainians of their victory.

We are told that Russia “instrumentalizes history”. But let us call a spade a spade: history is instrumentalized by those who omit inconvenient facts from it. Those who tear down monuments to Soviet soldiers and replace the Red Army with nameless “allies”. Those who explain the cult of Bandera as a “national peculiarity” and speak of the Holocaust, yet sidestep the question of Nazi collaborators. Those who remember the victims selectively – depending on the current political climate. A particular responsibility here lies with Germany, which goes to great lengths to distance itself from the burden of Nazism and, by invoking the passage of time, to downplay the crimes committed by the Nazis.

Russia, together with its allies and like-minded partners, will do everything in its power to oppose this. We will advocate at the international level for the crimes of the Third Reich against the Soviet people to be recognized as genocide. We will continue our work to defend historical truth and remind people who liberated Auschwitz. We will mention by name those who liberated and those who killed. And we will honour all the victims of Nazism without exception, without distinction, and without political censorship of their memory.

Victory Day is the greatest celebration of the victory over Nazism, an ideology that gave rise to the Holocaust, and honouring the liberators. A celebration without which modern Europe would have neither the freedom nor the right to speak of the value of human life.

Thank you for your attention.