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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 1132nd PLENARY MEETING OF
THE OSCE FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION**

25 March 2026

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

Madam Chairperson,

Last week, on 19 March, the delegation of the Russian Federation to the Vienna Negotiations on Military Security and Arms Control, together with the Ambassador-at-Large of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Rodion Miroshnik, held the fourth international teleconference entitled “War Crimes of the Armed Forces of Ukraine against the Civilian Population of the Belgorod Region”.

The Kyiv regime carries out daily attacks on this border region, with the cynical aim of making life unbearable for the people living there. To that end, the focus is on inflicting maximum damage on civilian infrastructure and targeting the population.

Weapons manufactured by EU and NATO member States are being actively used against the people of Belgorod. The attack on the city on 30 December 2023, ahead of the New Year’s holidays and carried out using a Czech-made Vampire multiple-launch rocket system, was barbaric. The same type of weaponry was employed on 30 August 2024 during an attack on Belgorod and the surrounding area. On 6 and 23 February this year, Belgorod was shelled with rockets from a US-made HIMARS multiple-launch rocket system, and an energy facility was hit. Civilians were injured as a result of these attacks. In total, over the past four years, more than 3,850 Belgorod residents have fallen victim to the Kyiv regime, 238 of whom were minors. Some 467 people were killed, including 23 children. More than 14,000 residents from 68 population centres have been forced to leave their homes.

Unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) predominate as the weapon of choice, especially in recent times. According to estimates by the Belgorod authorities, over 54,000 drones have been launched against the civilian population. But what is remarkable is not so much their number as the fact that these UAVs are being deliberately used by punitive squads of the Ukrainian armed forces against civilians. Ukrainian drone operators are carrying out targeted strikes on people and civilian vehicles, including ambulances and buses. A constant threat to life and limb continues to exist in 124 settlements.

Eyewitnesses to these events, who still find themselves in mortal danger on a daily basis, spoke about this during the international teleconference. Many of them have lost family members and loved ones. They shared their stories of tragedy with an international audience. Participants from various countries shared in these people's pain and expressed their sympathy.

Why are we telling you this now? Because here, at the OSCE, no one would even want to listen to these people. And even if they were allowed to take part in a plenary meeting of one of the decision-making bodies, they would not be heard. Some people would avert their eyes, while others might leave the room. The British or Canadian delegation would again insist that these individuals had "not been vetted" by their authorities. After all, evidence of shameful crimes committed by the Ukrainian armed forces against Russian citizens does not fit into the narrative being promoted by Western countries at the Forum. At virtually every meeting (and today's is no exception), Ukrainian representatives and their handlers level one false accusation after another against the Russian armed forces. Any pretext, no matter how trivial, is used to attack Russia. We firmly believe that every human life is of intrinsic value. That is beyond doubt. The key point here, however, is that "fighters" from the Ukrainian armed forces are targeting civilians – both adults and children – day in, day out. Yet most of those present in this room do not want to know about it, neither do they want to acknowledge this fact.

Ignorance, however, as we know, does not absolve one from responsibility.

According to Russia's Investigative Committee, since 2014, more than 9,300 criminal cases have been opened concerning crimes committed by the Kyiv regime. Investigations into 950 cases involving no fewer than 1,264 defendants have been completed. Among the defendants were Ukrainian military personnel, members of radical groups, members of law enforcement agencies and security forces, and foreign mercenaries. We have warned repeatedly and reiterate once again: all those guilty of crimes will be duly punished.

In particular, a verdict was handed down earlier against Colonel Mykola Dzyaman, commander of the 138th Dnipro Anti-Aircraft Missile Brigade of the Ukrainian Armed Forces' Air Command East, for committing a terrorist act (under Article 205.3b of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation). On 24 January 2024, he gave the criminal order to attack an Il-76 military transport cargo aircraft carrying six crew members and three Russian military police officers, who were escorting 65 Ukrainian prisoners of war. We would remind you that the handover of these prisoners was scheduled to take place that day on the border with the Sumy region. Human remains and documents belonging to Ukrainian military personnel were found at the crash site, along with fragments of a missile from a Patriot air defence system (according to experts, the strike was carried out by two Patriot missiles at an altitude of four kilometres).

We must also mention that, for almost two years, an investigation has been under way into one of the most horrific terrorist attacks in Russian history. On 22 March 2024, a terrorist attack on the Crocus City Hall concert venue in Moscow left 149 people dead and one person missing. A total of 609 people sustained injuries of varying degrees of severity. We are grateful to our US colleagues who, on the anniversary of the tragedy, expressed solidarity with all those who had lost loved ones that day and honoured the memory of the dead.

The Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation has reliably established that the crime was planned and carried out to serve the interests of the current Ukrainian leadership, and that a number of the accused were also planning to blow up an entertainment complex in Kaspiysk. On 12 March this year, 15 of the 19 defendants in the case concerning the terrorist attack on Crocus City Hall were sentenced to life imprisonment. Preliminary investigations are continuing in relation to two organizers and four members of the terrorist organization. They have been placed on the international wanted list and arrested *in absentia*.

Madam Chairperson,

We have already spoken here on numerous occasions about the fact that NATO and EU countries are, in effect, preparing for direct armed conflict with Russia within the next few years. This trend is reflected in military planning and exercises, in an unprecedented increase in military spending, in the militarization of European economies and in the targeted manipulation of public opinion. They need the Kyiv regime, with its willingness to drag out the conflict, solely to buy time and flex their own military muscle.

France is clearly leading the “coalition of the willing” when it comes to confrontation with Russia. It is actively involved in the arms production chain for re-equipping the armed forces of Alliance countries and strengthening the combat readiness of the Ukrainian armed forces. The idea of launching domestic production of various types of UAVs is being actively promoted in the Fifth Republic. To that end, France needs to close the gap between itself and other powers in this field, as it considers this factor to be a key element in building up its military capabilities. Furthermore, this is viewed in the context of a possible high-intensity conflict in Europe. The French Defence Ministry’s Directorate General of Armaments has allocated funding to five French companies for the development of medium-altitude, long-range UAVs, which are to be demonstrated with a payload as early as this year, and with deliveries to the armed forces expected to begin no later than 2028.

The Netherlands, too, is seizing every opportunity to demonstrate its involvement in anti-Russian activities. The country’s Defence Minister, Dilan Yeşilgöz-Zegerius, recently visited a centre in Germany that is part of the EU Military Assistance Mission in support of Ukraine (EUMAM Ukraine), where Ukrainians are being trained in survival and combat skills, such as operating Leopard 1A5 tanks. We would point out that more than 85,000 Ukrainians have undergone training at these centres. The Netherlands regularly sends its instructors to the United Kingdom as part of Operation Interflex to share their expertise with the Ukrainian armed forces in areas including tactics, marksmanship, handling of explosives, and so on.

Against this backdrop, Belgian Defence Minister Theo Francken stated that the country had no intention of “halting the military steamroller” and will continue to ramp up UAV production. At the same time, the Belgian authorities intend to seek economic returns: “investments will not flow abroad.” To that end, a new contract with a Ukrainian company for the large-scale production of UAVs and drone detection systems provides for the establishment of production facilities in Belgium.

The German company Rheinmetall and the British manufacturer of uncrewed surface vessels, Kraken, have agreed to set up production of surface drones for monitoring maritime areas. They plan to produce around 200 UAVs in Hamburg annually and increase this figure to 1,000 units per year in the future.

Portugal has been allocated 5.8 billion euros under the SAFE (Security Action for Europe) programme, which the authorities in Lisbon plan to make active use of for rearmament purposes with the aim of boosting the national economy, as the country’s physical infrastructure has in fact long been outdated. Here, too, particular attention is being paid to drone manufacturing. Under the aforementioned programme, 30 heavy UAVs (AR3 and AR5 categories), manufactured by the Portuguese company Tekever, are to be procured at a cost of over 140 million euros: half of these drones are intended for the Ukrainian armed forces. Furthermore, under bilateral contracts, there are plans to manufacture in Portugal components for the Ukrainian-designed Shark-M, Leleka-100M2 and A1-CM Furia UAVs (worth 77.5 million euros). The share of UAV exports from Portugal in 2025 stood at 21 per cent (of which around 12 per cent were destined for Ukraine), yet just five years ago this export category simply did not exist.

Bulgaria has announced its readiness to increase defence spending to 5 per cent of gross domestic product by 2035 and is working hard to modernize its armed forces to meet NATO standards. The country's defence industry is operating at full capacity, though its product range still consists of Soviet-era designs and their equivalents. Under the SAFE joint procurement mechanism, nearly 3.3 billion euros have been approved for the authorities in Sofia. First and foremost, these funds are intended for the procurement of radar systems, air defence and missile defence systems, 155 mm French-manufactured Caesar self-propelled guns, multiple-launch rocket systems (supposedly 12 MARS 3 systems, manufactured by the German firm KNDS using technology from the Israeli company Elbit Systems), along with UAVs and loitering munitions, electronic warfare systems, VL MICA missiles, transport equipment and 155 mm munitions, including as part of joint procurement for Ukraine.

The examples previously cited by the Russian delegation and those being mentioned now, which the delegations of the United Kingdom, Canada and EU States claim here are "transparent and legitimate" steps by NATO and EU countries, come together to form a very alarming and, at the same time, stark picture: Europe is preparing for war. To support this conclusion, we shall cite one further fact, which will make everything clear to military experts.

Finland has begun implementing a comprehensive set of measures to train reservists. Since November 2025, courses have been launched to train reserve military personnel in the operation of UAVs. Furthermore, rank-and-file reservists have begun to be actively retrained as tank crew commanders. We should like to point out that previously these positions were held only by officers, but it appears that Finnish strategists are already anticipating the likelihood of significant losses in armoured vehicles and personnel in the event of a potential armed conflict with Russia. Reservists are also taking part in NATO multinational exercises in Finland and abroad. At the end of 2025, 630 Finnish reservists were involved in the "Northern Axe 25" exercises. It is planned to include people from regions bordering Russia (and by Russia, in this instance, I mean the Leningrad and Murmansk regions and the Republic of Karelia) in the sabotage and reconnaissance units currently being formed. Furthermore, to ensure that information about "potential saboteurs" remains classified, their personal details are to be encrypted in open sources, and they are to be briefed in case law enforcement agencies take an interest in them during their trips to Russia. Is someone hankering after the laurels of Operation Brandenburg-800?

Against this backdrop, Volodymyr Zelenskyy's latest tour of Europe is clearly intended to help Ukraine remain in the spotlight in the face of the ongoing escalation in the Middle East. In Paris, on 13 March, he discussed with President Macron the possibilities for joint military production under the SAFE framework and also agreed on the delivery, as early as this year, of the SAMP/T air defence system – the only alternative to the Patriot batteries. In Romania, Mr. Zelenskyy met with Ukrainian military personnel who are undergoing training to fly F-16 fighter jets. Subsequently, on 17 March this year, he made a high-profile visit to London, where a series of meetings were arranged for him, culminating in an Audience with the Monarch. Understandably, it is vital for the Kyiv regime to refocus European public attention on the Ukraine issue, while at the same time securing as many military "handouts" as possible.

But how much real benefit is there in this?

The situation of the Ukrainian armed forces is rapidly deteriorating. Against the backdrop of ever-increasing irreplaceable losses, front-line military units are often understaffed by as much as 50 per cent. According to Ukrainian sources, the number of deserters among forcibly mobilized citizens is on the rise: from 650,000 to 1 million people. The Ukrainian General Staff is scaling back the training of Ukrainian military personnel abroad. The official reason, they say, is that Western instructors lack modern combat experience and are out of touch with the realities of war in Ukraine. That is true. Ukrainian military

personnel who have voluntarily surrendered to the Russian side confirm that “front-line fighter” crash courses do little to help them acquire the survival skills needed in real combat conditions. But there is another reason: Ukrainians sent abroad for training are increasingly choosing not to return and disappearing beyond Ukraine’s borders. They do not want to die for Volodymyr Zelenskyy’s criminal and terrorist regime.

The Kyiv regime is a tool of hybrid aggression against our State. The criminal tactics employed by the Ukrainian armed forces are aimed, among other things, at undermining the Russian people’s morale. Yet history is full of examples – well known to Germany and France – of the courage and unity shown by our people when the country is threatened. The Russian Federation will continue to pursue the objectives of the special military operation through both military and diplomatic means. Unless the root causes of the Ukrainian crisis are addressed and our country’s fundamental security interests taken into account, there can be no question of any sustainable and long-term settlement of the conflict.

Thank you for your attention.