

The OSCE Secretariat bears no responsibility for the content of this document and circulates it without altering its content. The distribution by OSCE Conference Services of this document is without prejudice to OSCE decisions, as set out in documents agreed by OSCE participating States.

FSC.DEL/70/24
16 February 2024

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY
MS. IULIA ZHDANOVA, MEMBER OF THE DELEGATION OF THE
RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS ON MILITARY
SECURITY AND ARMS CONTROL, AT THE 1070th PLENARY MEETING OF
THE OSCE FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION**

14 February 2024

**Agenda item: General statements
Subject: Implementation of OSCE politico-military commitments by Western
participating States**

Mr. Chairperson,

The implementation by the Organization's Western participating States of their politico-military commitments has of late become a truly burning issue at the OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC). As was pointed out in the statement by the delegation of the Republic of Belarus, the assurances by a number of NATO member countries of their commitment to conventional arms control in Europe as well as to confidence- and security-building measures (CSBMs) are not borne out in practice. The root cause of this situation is the path of open confrontation with the Russian Federation taken by the United States of America and its allies that is undermining the entire body of agreements on which the stability of the European continent has been based for decades.

Let us begin with the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security (1994). In violation of paragraphs 12, 13 and 22 of the Code of Conduct, we are seeing attempts by NATO member countries to gain military superiority. There is no question of any kind of restraint in their military expenditures. We can also see how schemes for the comprehensive containment of Russia are being "clad in iron" through the creation of a "new normal", which manifests itself in endless rotations of military contingents and the conduct of at least 30 annual major manoeuvres on our borders. This is accompanied by propaganda as regards Russia's hostile intentions and speculation about our plans to conquer "at least the Baltic States". At the same time, the notion that only the military potential of NATO can safeguard the security of the European countries and certain other States, and what is more only on the basis of force, is being implanted in the public consciousness and in practical policymaking. Unfortunately, given the current adventurism of the collective West's politicians, we cannot rule out that they will go as far as to pursue direct military confrontation with our country. In that regard, vital mechanisms that could help to de-escalate the situation and prevent unintentional incidents are being unilaterally blocked by the Alliance itself.

Against this alarming background, one may discern a complete departure by the Western OSCE participating States from the principles of rigorous export control in arms transfers and responsible

behaviour when considering such transfers to conflict zones – principles that they themselves have been promoting for many years. Numerous Western initiatives and best practices on various aspects of export controls for conventional arms aimed at preventing destabilizing accumulations of small arms and light weapons (SALW) and stockpiles of conventional ammunition (SCO) have overnight turned into a wild goose chase as far as their originators are concerned.

In particular, in accordance with long-standing international practice, deliveries of weapons always involve the submission of a relevant end-user certificate by the country receiving the weapons. One of the key conditions for the issuance of such a certificate is that the weapons received may not be re-exported without the exporting country's written consent. It is this provision that is currently being flagrantly violated by Bulgaria, Czechia, Poland, Slovakia and a number of other NATO countries led by the United States, which are trying to buy up Soviet/Russian armaments all over the world for their subsequent delivery to the Kyiv regime. Things have got to the point of petty forgeries of such certificates, which are being systematically produced in Prague through a peculiar "co-operation" arrangement established in NATO and the European Union.

These facts fly in the face of the Principles Governing Conventional Arms Transfers (1993), the OSCE Document on SALW (2000) and the Principles for Export Controls of Man-Portable Air Defence Systems (2008). For example, not so long ago, our US colleagues were making a huge deal of the idea of minimizing the export of man-portable air defence systems (MANPADS) and registering each unit transferred abroad, and were insisting on passages about the need for reliable control of such weapon systems being included in draft OSCE Ministerial Council decisions on SALW. And then their constructive zeal suddenly disappeared. It is as if they no longer care whether these MANPADS will be used in situ by Ukrainian radicals or whether they will find their way to other hotspots.

Given the high risk of Western weapons and military equipment ending up in illicit circulation and, *inter alia*, falling into the hands of extremist and terrorist elements – which could pose a threat to international peace and European security – we urge the US and EU delegations to give a detailed briefing at the FSC on what measures are being taken to prevent the illicit diversion of Western arms and ammunition from Ukraine to other parts of the world.

Lastly, separate mention should be made of how the OSCE participating States perceive their commitments under the Vienna Document 2011 on CSBMs. The delegation of the Republic of Belarus has already mentioned the selective implementation of the Document's provisions by some NATO members at the present stage. However, such a devious stance is nothing new. Suffice it to recall how, in the 2000s, Western countries repeatedly blocked our proposals for the further development of the Vienna Document 1999 because it was important for them to have a free hand for large-scale military campaigns. However, their position changed dramatically when, owing to the suspension of our country's participation in the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, they had to forgo part of the information they had been receiving about the Russian army. We also remember very well how, since 2014, the West has ignored Ukraine's egregious violations of at least 26 paragraphs of the Vienna Document 2011, effectively encouraging the militarization and Nazification of that country, along with terror and the killing of civilians by the Kyiv regime. It is going down this slippery slope that has led to the current deplorable outcome for European security as a whole.

Even from such a cursory and brief but objective review, it is clear that as soon as any politico-military agreements cease to meet the immediate needs of the United States and its allies, they blithely set aside common positions and agreed commitments. This is entirely in keeping with their policy of substituting existing international law with some kind of "rules-based order", where the "rules" favour the United States and its allies and are used to exert pressure on certain countries.

No wonder, in these circumstances, that for the second year in a row it is the Western participating States that are derailing consensus on the holding of the annual OSCE politico-military events that belong to the annual cycle on the Code of Conduct, SALW and SCA issues and the Vienna Document 2011. Their selective approach to the implementation of the provisions of agreements in the field of conventional arms control and CSBMs is leading to an escalation of tensions and to the destruction of the security architecture in the European region.

Thank you for your attention.