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**STATEMENT BY
MR. MAXIM BUYAKEVICH, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF
THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1509th (REINFORCED) MEETING OF
THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

24 February 2025

On Ukraine

Mr. Chairperson,

We firmly reject the torrent of lies and disinformation, and no less so the attempts to discredit Russia's actions, which are being carried out in full accordance with Chapter VII, Article 51, of the Charter of the United Nations. We emphasize that our country is defending itself from the threats that NATO countries have for years been deliberately creating in relation to the security of the inhabitants of Ukraine, Donbass and the rest of Russia. Those who spread the false argument about some sort of "unprovoked aggression" are deliberately playing fast and loose with concepts, manipulating the facts and misleading the international community.

After the February 2014 coup d'état in Kyiv, which was orchestrated, funded and organized from abroad, some Western countries embarked on nurturing a militarized puppet regime of a neo-Nazi persuasion in Ukraine that would be able to engage in military adventures involving its own population and neighbouring countries.

It was at that very time that the intensive military "beefing up" of Ukraine began, that is, regular arms deliveries with a view to systematically escalating tensions – something that continues to this day. What we were, in effect, dealing with here was the Kyiv regime being supplied with instruments for crimes against the civilian population, first the population of Donbass and then the population of the Dnieper Lowland, the Kursk region and other Russian territories, crimes that continue to be committed even as we speak.

The Minsk Package of Measures of 12 February 2015, endorsed by United Nations Security Council resolution 2202, was used by the Kyiv regime and its Western sponsors merely as a "diplomatic smokescreen" to buy time to militarize Ukraine and prepare it for combat operations against Russia. Those directly involved in the drawing-up of the Package of Measures – both in Ukraine itself and in Germany and France, whose leaders were co-authors and guarantors of the implementation of the Minsk agreements – have admitted this.

The OSCE was also not up to the task of bringing peace any closer in Donbass and preventing a broader escalation. Its Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine was meant to impartially observe and report on the security situation and facilitate political dialogue on the ground, but it completely failed in its mandated tasks.

The geopolitical calculation was obvious: once again to try to hoodwink Russia – in the naive hope that our country would give in to the collective pressure of Western countries and never resort to using military force to protect our people in Donbass and safeguard our country's security.

We would particularly note that, until the bitter end, Russian diplomacy was prevailing upon the “post-Maidan authorities” in Kyiv to implement the Minsk Package of Measures – the only document that could ensure the territorial integrity of what was then Ukraine and guarantee the possibility of reaching a sustainable political and diplomatic settlement.

Meanwhile, under the supervision of Western “specialists”, the Ukrainian Government drew up concrete military plans for offensive operations and rehearsed practical urban warfare operations. Combat training courses funded by Western governments and involving instructors from NATO countries were held, including for members of neo-Nazi groups.

On several occasions we have drawn OSCE participating States' attention to the copies of documents from the Kyiv regime's military formations obtained in the course of the special operation, notably instructions and orders issued by the military leadership. From these it is clear that, in early 2022, Volodymyr Zelenskyy's formations moved on to the final stage of operational co-ordination with a view to launching an attack on Russian citizens. Russia's actions to protect Donbass and eliminate the threats to our people's safety created by NATO member countries were an essential response measure that we were forced to take.

Nowadays, many in the West are making no secret about the fact that they are using the Ukrainians to wage a proxy war against Russia in order to achieve geopolitical goals. For this reason, a number of Western elites openly oppose a diplomatic solution to the crisis that would take into account the realities that have emerged.

Given that background, Russian citizens have merely rallied further around the actions of our country's leadership within the framework of the special military operation. Three years after the start of the operation, it is clear that Russia is confidently withstanding the collective attacks by Western countries – political attacks, economic attacks as well as military attacks carried out by NATO's “puppets” in Kyiv. Russian weapons have proven themselves with distinction in combat conditions and are constantly being modernized. NATO equipment is burning on the battlefield every day, and the conviction of Russian citizens in the need to achieve the goals of the special military operation as soon as possible is only getting stronger. In 2024, the Russian military was firmly in possession of the strategic initiative and liberated some 4,500 square kilometres of territory. In the first two months of this year, that figure was more than 600 square kilometres.

Russia will continue to consistently defend its legitimate national interests for as long as it takes, and to protect its people by all available means. Since the very beginning of the special military operation, our country's position on Ukraine has remained unchanged: in order to prevent a large-scale escalation and achieve sustainable peace, it is essential that the supply of NATO armaments and mercenaries to Ukrainian territory and the use of these to kill Russians and Ukrainians be stopped; there must, further, be a return to substantive dialogue on a demilitarized and denazified future for Ukraine. Dialogue based on the

consideration of realities and a sober assessment of what is happening, rather than the ritualistic empty rhetoric that we have heard in this room today from Western representatives once again.

On 18 February, a meeting of high-ranking representatives of Russia and the United States of America was held in Riyadh (Saudi Arabia), during the course of which the Ukraine issue was also raised. The first step was taken towards building trust and establishing mutually respectful dialogue on key aspects of bilateral relations and key issues on the international agenda – of course, on the basis of recognizing national interests.

Against the backdrop of intensified efforts by major international players to find ways of resolving the security crisis in the OSCE area, a number of NATO countries are attempting not only to prolong the armed confrontation in and around Ukraine, but also to ignite it with renewed vigour. Over the past two weeks, the dispatch of further military supplies to the Ukrainian armed forces has been announced in Germany, Sweden, Spain and several other countries. In general, the EU-wide structures are working on providing the Kyiv regime with additional weapons worth more than 6 billion euros.

The United Kingdom, which is playing a leading role in prolonging the conflict, has pledged to allocate over 3 billion dollars annually for the military needs of the criminal regime in Kyiv. There is once again speculation about sending not just British mercenaries but regular military personnel to regime-controlled territories, all under the guise of some kind of “security guarantees” for Ukraine. Through the prism of the Ukrainian conflict, parodies of Napoleonic ideas about a certain “responsibility for the fate of Europe as a whole” are also heard from France.

Let us emphasize: bringing NATO military infrastructure closer to the Russian border and attempts at the military development of Ukrainian territory, coupled with attacks on the Russian-speaking population, were among the root causes of the current grave security crisis in the OSCE area. Any new madcap plans by certain politicians in the West to try their luck in military clashes with the Russian army on Russian soil will not only make the prospect of peace less likely, but will put Europe and the world on the brink of a large-scale conflict.

On a separate note, we would point out that the crimes committed against the civilian population by the Kyiv regime’s armed formations and by neo-Nazi paramilitary units over many years – including crimes committed with the use of NATO weapons – are deliberately covered up in the West. There they stubbornly pretend not to notice them at all. This is a tremendous challenge to common sense involving both political infantilism and cruel cynicism: if, for political reasons, some in the West “fail to see” Russian civilian casualties, that means there aren’t any at all.

At the Munich Security Conference, the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Kaja Kallas, said that, I quote: “The difference between Russia and Ukraine is that no Russian civilians are dying, meaning no Russian women and children are losing their lives.” The purpose of such manipulation is clear: for the West to try to absolve themselves of responsibility for the crimes committed by the Ukrainian armed forces using weapons supplied by EU and NATO member countries.

The Kyiv regime’s atrocities are being hushed up despite the fact that the Russian Federation regularly publishes ample evidence of the consequences of such atrocities. Especially for those who are still trying to manipulate reality, we circulated the Russian Foreign Ministry’s thematic report (in Russian and English) on the casualties in 2024 (SEC.DEL/50/25) at the OSCE today. There were no fewer than 5,399 civilian casualties, at least 809 of whom were killed, including 51 children. It is criminal to ignore them.

Against this backdrop, there have been many strident statements, including from today's gatherings in Kyiv, demanding some kind of "inclusive" participation in any potential settlement negotiations. It is particularly strange to hear this from those who are covering up for the Zelenskyy regime, supporting its terrorist activities and also making efforts to prolong the conflict by supplying weapons, intelligence, instructors and mercenaries.

Today, in Kyiv and most European capitals they simply do not have realistic, constructive ideas that could be applied in a potential settlement of the Ukrainian conflict. In other words, those in power there simply lack strategic vision when it comes to a way out of the conflict, and those who want to bang the drums of war still set the tone. This means that a role for the European Union in the settlement process, which may start in the foreseeable future, is completely ruled out until its approaches are adapted to the geopolitical realities. By the way, the situation being what it is, we are observing some deliberate signals from Washington to Kyiv, namely that Mr. Zelenskyy is also far from being in a position to dictate terms on regional security issues and that his participation in negotiations on a settlement is by no means obligatory.

We have no illusions as to why the political elites of the heavyweight European countries and the traditional warmongers from the Baltics States and Poland, as well as the EU leadership, are continuing on a course of military escalation: their political future is utterly contingent upon a confrontational anti-Russian narrative. That is why the demands we are hearing that they be included in possible negotiation processes are simply ridiculous.

In closing, we emphasize that any potential options for a settlement should be aimed at eliminating the root causes of the current crisis and bringing about a sustainable and just peace, with account taken of the interests of all sovereign States, including of course Russia. As Russian President Vladimir Putin has repeatedly pointed out, the Istanbul agreements of March 2022, whose implementation was thwarted by the Kyiv regime at the behest of its "Anglo-Saxon" sponsors, can be taken as their basis – with adjustments made for the current geopolitical realities. As long as this approach is not met with due understanding, the special operation will be continued by military means until all the tasks set have been accomplished.

Thank you for your attention.