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Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY  
MR. ALEKSANDR VOLGAREV, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF  
THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1373rd MEETING OF THE  
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

12 May 2022

**On the ongoing gross violations of the rights of the Russian and Russian-speaking  
population in some Western OSCE participating States**

Mr. Chairperson,

The issue raised by us continues, unfortunately, to be relevant. In an interview with the British newspaper *The Telegraph*, the Prime Minister of Poland, Mateusz Morawiecki, who is well known for his Russophobic views, stated the following: “‘Russkiy Mir’ [the ‘Russian world’ ideology] is a cancer which is consuming not only the majority of Russian society, but also poses a deadly threat to the whole of Europe. Therefore it is not enough to support Ukraine in its military struggle with Russia. We must root out this monstrous new ideology entirely.”

At the same time, we note that, following a phase of complete denial, a process is now under way whereby some Western countries are acknowledging that Russophobia and discrimination against everything connected with Russia do exist within their borders.

In this regard, we consider a statement that the representative of Switzerland made during the last Permanent Council meeting remarkable: she publicly, for the record as it were, confirmed the anti-Russian motivation behind the actions of the management of the St. Gallen music festival when she read out to us excerpts from a press release by the organizers. We hope that other colleagues, too, will find the courage to admit that this is not an imaginary problem, not a question of “isolated incidents”, as the distinguished Permanent Representative of Germany last week referred to Russophobic manifestations, but a systemic phenomenon that casts shame on all States of the collective West, which see themselves as leading lights in the field of human rights protection standards.

Mr. Chairperson,

A new pretext for a surge in Russophobia in a number of Member States of the European Union has been found in the date of 9 May. As is known, commemorative events were held on that day in many countries worldwide. Most civilized countries managed to ensure that appropriate security measures were in place so that all those wishing to do so, including representatives of diplomatic institutions, could honour the memory of the fallen, lay flowers at monuments and hold relevant peaceful marches.

Unfortunately, Poland, the holder of our Organization's Chairmanship, "distinguished" itself once again: a barbarous and well-orchestrated provocation took place there. Images of the attack on the Russian ambassador in that country, who had arrived together with his wife and embassy staff to pay tribute to the memory of the Soviet soldiers who fell heroically in the liberation of Warsaw from the Nazis, quickly spread around the world. While the police stood idly by, the wreath-laying ceremony was disrupted. Given that the law enforcement agencies effectively "stepped aside" and that there were even attempts by high-ranking officials of that country (for example, the Polish Minister of the Interior, Mr. Mariusz Kamiński) to justify this provocative violence, there are serious doubts about the ability of the authorities in Warsaw to provide adequate security for accredited diplomats.

The actions of the Latvian authorities, which began "preparing" in good time for the commemorative date and unleashed an openly Russophobic campaign, introducing sweeping restrictions and intimidating people, can scarcely be described as civilized. They culminated on the morning of 10 May, when a tractor swept away the fresh flowers and candles at the foot of the Monument to the Liberators of Riga. The authorities of that country are evidently so afraid of seeing the true scale of remembrance of, and gratitude towards, the soldier-liberators that they are willing to declare war even on flowers.

When speaking about monuments to and common graves of the Soviet soldiers who vanquished Nazism, we cannot but point out that the desecration of these has for a long time been occurring continuously, above all in Poland and the Baltic countries. The wave of anti-Russian vandalism that began in the past two months has engulfed Austria, Bulgaria, Slovakia, the Baltic States, Poland, Germany and the territory of other Western participating States. Unfortunately, despite our repeated appeals, we have not heard any assessment of these events from the Personal Representatives of the Polish OSCE Chairmanship on tolerance and non-discrimination, Mr. Andrew Baker, Ms. Regina Polak and Mr. Mehmet Paçacı. Instead, these "experts" abase themselves by circulating mendacious Russophobic pronouncements, by an untenable interpretation of reality and by low-grade assessments.

Mr. Chairperson,

We are obliged to note that poor-quality, ill-founded expertise, biased one-sided approaches and the deliberate blackout on the surge in Russophobia in a number of Western OSCE participating States are characteristic not merely of the Polish Chairmanship and its Personal Representatives.

A special place in this "pantheon" is undoubtedly occupied by the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), which, for example, offers no public reaction to incidents involving physical attacks against people on account of their Russian origin. What is more, there are sometimes incidents like the one which occurred recently in a New York establishment, where the aggressor simply assumed that the man he was assaulting was a Russian. Or are the ODIHR management following European Union precepts, which we have repeatedly heard here, in considering physical violence to be a manifestation of righteous wrath?

The lack of any response from the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media to the attempted terrorist act against journalists from the Rossiya Segodnya news agency living in Berlin and their family members is surprising. As reported, an explosive device was discovered on 6 May in the building in which the journalists were housed. Fortunately, the Berlin police managed to neutralize it in time and there was no detonation. The incident was covered in detail by both Russian and German media, and so it is simply impossible for the Media Representative not to have known about it. Or does Ms. Teresa Ribeiro consider these journalists to be "Russian propagandists" as well, whose life is not worth a farthing? Responsibility for this latest Russophobic incident rests entirely and solely with the authorities of Germany and the European

Union “bloc”, which through their statements have themselves provoked hostile actions against Russian media workers.

Mr. Chairperson,

When analysing what is going on, one cannot fail to note that Russophobia is occurring not only in Western OSCE participating States. The European Union is actively helping other countries to foster Russophobia. The most telling example in this regard is Ukraine, which following the February 2014 coup d'état found itself being steered from outside by Western countries that cultivated Russophobic sentiments there.

The European Union, the United States of America, the United Kingdom and Canada simply ignored the massive violations of the Russian-speaking population's linguistic rights when the authorities in Kyiv engaged in forced Ukrainization and denied these people their cultural and linguistic rights, seeking to change their identity. Over the past eight years, more than six legislative texts and strategies have been adopted and are being implemented that have substantially curtailed the right to use the Russian language and minority languages in most spheres of public life. As for the Russian language specifically, it was subjected to dual discrimination in that country – both vis-à-vis the Ukrainian language and vis-à-vis the languages of the EU Member States.

On 5 March, it became known that the relevant Ukrainian government departments had drawn up recommendations to remove from library collections those works of Russian literature that the ministry in question considered to be “propagandistic”. The import and distribution of any publications from Russian territory had previously been prohibited with a view to “preventing cultural and information-related influence” on the public mood of the inhabitants of Ukraine.

We expect the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, Kairat Abdrakhmanov, to duly take up this matter as well. We believe that the numerous instances cited by us here of infringement of the rights of the Russian-speaking population in the countries “to the west of Vienna” also demand the closest attention from the Commissioner.

Mr. Chairperson,

The points enumerated today confirm that our Organization's work is hindered not by the consensus rule, which some would make out to be a “vestige of the past”, but, rather, by double standards and the lack of impartiality in the activities of some officials and executive structures. We call on the official authorities of Western OSCE participating States to stop, once and for all, discriminating against the Russian and Russian-speaking population, and on the Organization's executive structures to give a principled assessment of Russophobic manifestations.

Thank you for your attention.