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**STATEMENT BY
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THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1434th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

20 July 2023

On the ongoing crimes by the Kyiv regime and the dangerous policies of the Western alliance countries to escalate tensions

Mr. Chairperson,

Given its lack of success along the combat line, the Kyiv regime continues with the tried-and-tested tactic of attacking civilian objects, that is, resorting to terrorist methods in order to intimidate the civilian population.

In the early hours of 17 July, the Crimean Bridge was attacked once again. On this occasion the terrorist attack was carried out by the Kyiv regime using two water-surface drones, or uncrewed boats. Such actions have been pointless from a military perspective: that critical civilian infrastructure facility is not being used for military purposes. Two civilians were killed as a result of the terrorist attack. A married couple from the Belgorod region had been heading for a holiday in Crimea together with their daughter: Alexey and Natalya Kulik died at the scene of the explosion, leaving their 14-year-old daughter, Angelina, an orphan. She was admitted to an intensive care unit in Krasnodar in a moderately severe condition.¹

Over in Kyiv they at once acknowledged their responsibility for what had happened. Declarations were made about the successful execution of some kind of joint operation by the Kyiv regime's naval forces and intelligence services. In the morning of 17 July, the Security Service of Ukraine published a statement unequivocally confirming its involvement in those actions.

The Russian Investigative Committee has instituted proceedings on the basis of evidence of an offence covered by Article 205 of the Russian Criminal Code (terrorist acts). The origin of the uncrewed boats that were used is being ascertained, as is the involvement of foreign individuals in the planning, preparation and commission of this crime. It is evident that the Kyiv regime did not have the capabilities to conduct such a technically complex terrorist foray on its own.

¹ Statement by the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the terrorist attack on the Crimean Bridge, https://mid.ru/ru/foreign_policy/news/1897152/?lang=en

We would point out that the US commercial company Maxar, which provides satellite imaging services (satellite imagery of the Earth's surface) and makes no secret of its co-operation with the US Department of Defense, carried out targeted imaging of the Crimean Bridge on two occasions over the past few weeks, namely on 20 June and 12 July. I would remind you that the provision of data from US satellites was officially included by the US Government in the bundle of "services" making up its recent new tranche of military aid for the Kyiv regime.

As a countermeasure, in the early hours of both 18 and 19 July the Russian armed forces used high-precision sea-based weapons to carry out retaliatory strikes on facilities where the Kyiv regime was preparing terrorist attacks against Russia involving uncrewed boats, and also on the places where those boats were being manufactured. Relevant infrastructure that was being used to supply the Ukrainian armed forces was destroyed in the Odessa and Mykolaiv regions. On a separate note, we must mention that the attacks involving Ukrainian uncrewed boats were carried out exploiting the "grain corridor", which, in accordance with the conditions of the Black Sea Initiative, was to be used exclusively for peaceful purposes.

None of the sponsors or overlords of the Kyiv regime has condemned the killing of civilians on the Crimean Bridge – whether publicly or in this room today. Not a peep is to be heard from the OSCE leadership either. The Chairmanship is silent, Secretary General Helga Maria Schmid is keeping a low profile – as with many other topics, they prefer not to take notice of the Kyiv regime's atrocities, adhering instead to the NATO precepts about whitewashing Kyiv's terrorists, who are receiving Western military assistance. There is simply no other way of explaining their silence and blatant double standards.

Theirs is a truly deafening silence. Especially when Kyiv regime officials have no qualms about proclaiming the goal of "killing Russians anywhere on the face of this world" (Kyrylo Budanov, chief of military intelligence) – when, at their behest, assassination attempts are made in Russia on journalists, public figures, entrepreneurs and civil servants who have never held a weapon in their hands.

In early July, the Russian Federal Security Service thwarted an attempt on the life of the Head of the Republic of Crimea, Sergey Aksyonov. A man born in 1988 was arrested. He had been recruited by the Security Service of Ukraine and underwent special training at one of the military training sites controlled by the Kyiv regime. This criminal arrived in Crimea in June 2023 and was caught red-handed just as he was removing an explosive device from a cache.

A few days ago, the Russian Federal Security Service, together with the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Investigative Committee, foiled the plans of the Kyiv regime's intelligence services for other targeted killings, including one targeting Margarita Simonyan, editor-in-chief of the Rossiya Segodnya news agency. These crimes were being organized by neo-Nazis from the "Paragraph 88" group. They indicated that they had been acting on instructions from the Security Service of Ukraine and that they were counting on receiving a reward from that agency's officers amounting to the equivalent of 1.5 million roubles for each murder. By the way, as recently as at the last Permanent Council meeting, the US Permanent Representative was criticizing Ms. Simonyan for her remarks. Will the US representatives today condemn the attempt to arrange for her assassination? Or will they once again remain silent, as was the case after the US-controlled Ukrainian intelligence services murdered Darya Dugina and Vladlen Tatarsky, after Zakhar Prilepin was severely injured and after other such tragedies?

On 12 July, near Ugledar (Donetsk People's Republic, Russia), members of the Kyiv regime's formations who had been lying in ambush in a wooded area suddenly emerged from their hiding place and, at point-blank range, shot dead some civilians who were travelling in a civilian car on the only unmined road. A video of the incident recorded by a drone instantly went viral. To cover their tracks, these criminal

Ukrainian neo-Nazis dumped the bodies of the civilians they had murdered into the undergrowth and hid the car in the forest before making off hastily – all their actions were captured in the video.

Furthermore, as a result of shelling of peaceful residential areas in the Donetsk People's Republic and the Bryansk and Zaporozhye regions, at least five people were killed over the past week (including a boy from the village of Tarasovka in the Zaporozhye region, who was killed in the courtyard of his home) and upwards of twenty civilians injured.

Let us, finally, touch on the topic of the Black Sea Initiative, which has been mentioned here. We will not respond to the by now habitual spectacle of Western diplomats and representatives of the Kyiv regime engaging in distortion of the facts. We would remind you that two documents were signed in Istanbul a year ago to make up a “package” of interrelated agreements, namely the Black Sea Initiative concerning the export of foodstuffs from the territories controlled by the Kyiv regime on the one hand, and the Russia-United Nations Memorandum on normalizing Russian exports of agricultural products and fertilizers on the other.²

Contrary to the declared humanitarian goals, the export of Ukrainian foodstuffs was almost at once put on a purely commercial footing with a view to serving the interests of the Kyiv regime and its Western handlers. Moreover, the Russia-United Nations Memorandum has to date never really worked: the Russian bank payments, insurance and transport logistics, spare parts supplies and foreign assets have been completely blocked as a result of Western countries' illegitimate restrictive measures. The European Union alone has launched five new packages of “sanctions” since July 2022. The bottom line is that none of the five systemic issues covered by the Memorandum has been addressed. And Russia is not to blame for that.

What is more, Western countries have impeded Russia's humanitarian efforts to help countries in need. I recall our country's announcement that it would supply Russian mineral fertilizers free of charge. However, these finished products ended up blocked in the ports of EU countries. Since the Black Sea Initiative was announced in September 2022, only two consignments have been shipped – 20,000 tonnes to Malawi and 24,000 tonnes to Kenya – out of the 262,000 tonnes of goods tied down in Belgium, the Netherlands and the Baltic States. Russia has paid for the delivery and transportation of these shipments and was willing to work on others.

Lastly, the Togliatti-Odessa ammonia pipeline, the revival of which was provided for by the Istanbul agreements, did not resume operation either. It had once pumped around 2 million tonnes of a raw material required for the production of fertilizers – enough to safeguard the food supply for 45 million people. However, on 5 June, this ammonia pipeline (a completely non-military facility) was deliberately attacked and destroyed by the Kyiv regime.

To reiterate: under the guise of the humanitarian corridor and shipping enabled as part of the Black Sea Initiative, Volodymyr Zelenskyy's regime regularly tried to attack Russian civilian and military facilities.

In these circumstances there is no longer any point in implementing the agreement on the export of Ukrainian agricultural products – an arrangement that was interrelated with the Memorandum. We can very well do without such a lopsided game. Nor are we happy with the way in which the Kyiv regime and its Western handlers misused the humanitarian nature of the deal to attain commercial, military, terroristic and other objectives.

2 Statement by the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the Istanbul agreements, https://mid.ru/ru/foreign_policy/news/1897157/?lang=en

From 18 July the Black Sea Initiative ceased to be in effect, in accordance with paragraph H of the Istanbul agreements. This implies revocation of guarantees for the safety of navigation, curtailment of the maritime humanitarian corridor, the return of the north-western waters of the Black Sea to the status of a temporarily dangerous area and the disbandment of the Joint Co-ordination Centre in Istanbul. Only if tangible results are obtained, as opposed to endless empty promises and assurances, will Russia be ready to reconsider the possibility of reinstating the Black Sea Initiative. Assistance for countries in need will continue, though, to be a focus of Russian diplomacy: a substantive discussion about food security on the African continent is already set to take place during the Russia-Africa Economic and Humanitarian Forum to be held in St. Petersburg on 27 and 28 July this year.

Let us take a look at specific figures and facts. Attempts to assert à la Mr. Zelenskyy that Ukrainian agricultural exports are nothing less than a linchpin of global food stability look highly ridiculous. During the “grain deal” period, a total of 32.8 million tonnes of Ukrainian foodstuffs were exported through the maritime corridor, of which more than 70 per cent went to countries with a higher-than-average income – to “well-fed” countries, as it were. The poorest States, notably Ethiopia, Yemen, Afghanistan, the Sudan and Somalia, received less than 3 per cent, that is, just 922,092 tonnes. One thing is obvious: certain Western countries care only about their own interests; they are not concerned about the food supply-related problems of developing countries. It would not be amiss to recall that ownership of a considerable proportion of Ukrainian arable land, which has been sustaining the country’s agricultural exports, was transferred by the post-Maidan regime in Kyiv to Western corporations, such as Cargill, DuPont and Monsanto. To that end, the moratorium in Ukraine on the sale of agricultural land to foreigners was even lifted. Since then, the country’s key riches have by no means been at the disposal of all its inhabitants.

We should add that Western countries – above all the United States of America, the United Kingdom and France – hindered the United Nations Security Council’s endorsement of the Black Sea Initiative at the time: in July and November 2022 they blocked the attempts to adopt any Security Council document that mentioned the Russia-United Nations Memorandum. Evidently, anything else would simply not have fitted in with their anti-Russian endeavours in the field of “sanctions”.

It is ultimately very interesting to observe the so-called solidarity of a number of EU countries when it comes to safeguarding Ukrainian agricultural exports. As is known, at the urging of the five EU States that share a border with Ukraine, the European Commission imposed a ban on the import of Ukrainian grain and other foodstuffs into their territory. Only yesterday, those countries requested the EU authorities to extend the ban until at least the end of this year.

One final point. The situation along the combat line shows that, despite the military supplies from NATO States, the members of the Ukrainian formations, much as they are trained, equipped and armed by the Alliance’s countries, cannot, and will not be able to, achieve any significant progress. The military provisioning of the Kyiv regime is not bringing a settlement closer – on the contrary, it is making it more elusive and entails even more casualties and destruction. All this is understood perfectly well in the West, where they do not really hide the fact that their goal is to drag out the armed confrontation for as long as possible.

This may be inferred, for example, from recent remarks by the Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, Mark Milley, who foresees that attempts to break through the defences deep inside Russian territory will, I quote, be “very difficult ... very long and ... very, very bloody” for the Ukrainian armed forces. Or, similarly, from assessments by British Secretary of State for Defence Ben Wallace, who has explicitly called Ukrainian territory a “battle lab”, where “lessons” are being learned. Need we remind you of the obsequious

pronouncements by the Kyiv regime's Defence Minister, Oleksii Reznikov, who on more than one occasion has invited the NATO States to use his country's territory as a "testing ground" for Western weapons?

The Kyiv regime's plans to employ British-made depleted uranium ordnance and US-made cluster munitions are a gesture of despair in view of the dwindling of Western arsenals and the lack of military success of Mr. Zelenskyy's formations.

Not only of despair, though. The heinous act of supplying indiscriminate weapons – which has been condemned by an overwhelming majority of the international community and by members of its intellectual elite – is a brazen demonstration of the bloodlust and utter amorality of the masters of the Western world. It fills one with shame to look at the faces of people in this room as they try to appear indifferent. Behind that facial expression is awareness of the crime that is being committed, and for which they will yet be called to account.

The NATO puppets in Kyiv make no secret of their desire to, I quote, "destroy Russia so that it no longer exists as a country within its current borders". And there is no way that can be dismissed as "Kremlin propaganda", for such a goal was publicly proclaimed on 1 December 2022, with the eyes of the media on him, by the head of the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine, Oleksii Danilov, during the Kyiv Security Forum. We have drawn the Permanent Council's attention to that pronouncement by a Kyiv regime official, among other similar pronouncements, in twelve of our statements this year alone (on 11, 19 and 26 January, 9, 16 and 24 February, 16 March, 27 April, 18 and 25 May, and 1 and 22 June). Nonetheless, at the previous Permanent Council meeting a representative of the Kyiv regime claimed, without batting an eyelid, that the regime had never set itself such a goal. We believe that everyone knows what to make of all this.

To conclude. NATO's policy of deliberately escalating tensions in the Ukrainian conflict is extremely dangerous and poses new threats. However, expectations that our country will bend to this pressure will never come to fruition. Russia has all the resources and capabilities to successfully complete the special operation and attain all its objectives. Our country's population understands what is being decided in the Ukrainian conflict today, what the West wants to achieve and what is at stake.

Our country will continue steadily on its sovereign course aimed at meeting its security needs, protecting its values, strengthening its authority in the international arena, and shaping a just and multipolar world order based on the Charter of the United Nations and the principles and norms of international law.

Thank you for your attention.