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**STATEMENT BY
MR. KONSTANTIN GAVRILOV, HEAD OF THE DELEGATION OF THE
RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS ON MILITARY
SECURITY AND ARMS CONTROL, AT THE 1054th PLENARY MEETING OF
THE OSCE FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION**

13 September 2023

Agenda item: Opening session under the Canadian Chairmanship

Madam Chairperson,

We congratulate you on the beginning of your country's Chairmanship of the OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC). We welcome the Minister of National Defence of Canada, Mr. Bill Blair, and thank him for outlining the Chairmanship's priorities for the current session.

We trust that, despite the significant differences in OSCE countries' approaches when it comes to assessing the current grave security situation throughout Europe, the forthcoming discussions will take place in accordance with the FSC's existing mandate and will help to strengthen its role as a platform for politico-military dialogue. There is no doubt that, in the present circumstances, a lot comes down to the role of the Chairmanship, which is called upon to take into account the interests of all the participating States and help the Organization to revert to a culture of mutually respectful exchange of opinions. It is on the basis of these criteria that we shall draw our conclusions about the work of our Canadian colleagues at the Forum. Brash attempts to impose one-sided NATO and EU approaches will not work any more now than they have done in the past.

We welcome the fact that, unlike your predecessors the Bulgarian Chairmanship team, you, Madam Chairperson, have held preliminary consultations with the Russian delegation, thereby facilitating a mutual understanding of our respective priorities. However, we shall gauge the work performed by the Chairmanship of this autonomous OSCE politico-military decision-making body by its actions, not simply its words.

We have listened carefully to Minister Blair's statement on the main areas of the Forum's work. We observe that, for the time being, the Canadian Chairmanship continues to take an anti-Russian tack adopted in close co-ordination with the United States of America and the United Kingdom. Such approaches informed by a "zero-sum game" mentality are fast becoming obsolete given the tectonic shifts that are taking place in the international security system.

The special military operation has put an end to the collective West's domination in the military sphere. The collective West's scope for advancing its interests in various regions of the world has shrunk significantly. The ongoing changes have enhanced the role of Asian, African and Latin American countries in the global system, including when it comes to the use of natural resources for the sovereign development of States.

Just as the Red Army's crushing of fascism in Europe in the previous century gave a strong impetus to the anti-colonial movement around the world, so the defeat of the Western-supported Ukrainian neo-fascists today will act as a deterrent to contemporary neocolonialism.

The task of forging a democratic and multipolar world order is currently on the global agenda. A majority of countries in the world are gradually growing weary of the collective West's pressure and manipulations, but they are willing to engage in honest, equitable and mutually respectful co-operation. It is through this prism that Russia, its friends and like-minded countries approach the development of multifaceted relations with all interested States and regional integration institutions, including the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Eurasian Economic Union, the BRICS group, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the Caribbean Community and the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf. The second Russia-Africa Summit proved a success. The G20 Summit was marked by the strengthening of the Global South's positions in global governance mechanisms, which will ensure that its real weight is adequately reflected in world affairs, where the BRICS countries have already surpassed the Group of Seven in terms of gross national product. The collective West's absolute political and economic domination is a thing of the past.

There is obviously no way that the course of history can be reversed. The world has changed fundamentally: what is called for are alternative methods of ensuring international security and stability through the creation, in various regions of the planet, of mechanisms that are not controlled by the United States and its satellites.

Against this backdrop, the politico-military situation in Europe continues to deteriorate rapidly. Flouting the principle of equal and indivisible security that was agreed on at the highest level at the OSCE, the NATO bloc has banked on an all-out hybrid war against the Russian Federation, which is on the verge of spiralling into direct armed conflict. The United States has derailed a number of key agreements in the field of arms control and non-proliferation. Just a few years ago, experts proposed drawing on the experience gained at the FSC to develop confidence-building measures for the Asia-Pacific region. Now, out of the entire *acquis* of dialogue in Europe, the only item that is being exported to Asia is the idea of bloc confrontation, which has brought Europe nothing positive. The Forum's participating States would do well to reflect on that.

The practice whereby certain participating States exploit the OSCE's politico-military platform to advance narrow national interests has acquired an unprecedented scale of late. As a result, the FSC agenda is being constantly expanded in an unwarranted manner to cover human rights issues, "gender" issues and climate issues, among others. We observe that the Canadian Chairmanship has likewise decided, despite our words of caution, to go down that path by including the topic of information threats in the work programme. What is more, the fact that the FSC, in accordance with its mandate, should not be dealing with these aspects, is being consciously ignored. Such actions once again indicate that the real objective of all this is to exert pressure on undesirable countries. We shall put an end to this practice.

We have similar questions with regard to your proposal for a discussion in the format of a joint meeting of the FSC and the OSCE Permanent Council on the topic of post-traumatic stress disorder resulting from participation in combat. There can scarcely be anyone present who would venture to deny that our

Organization has no expertise in this field and is unable to help in addressing the corresponding problems. The practical contribution of such meetings is patently zero, and we categorically object to the FSC's resources being wasted on "exercises" of this kind.

Instead, we expect the professional consideration of practical issues related to the implementation of OSCE projects on small arms and light weapons and stockpiles of conventional ammunition to be revived at a thematic meeting that, in accordance with tradition, is meant to take place in October. Should the Western participating States thwart a consensus on holding that meeting, we will regard that as backtracking on agreed commitments on their part. The same goes for the Meeting of the Heads of Verification Centres of Vienna Document participating States, about which we have not heard one word from the Chairmanship today.

Discussions on the politico-military aspects of the crisis in Ukraine will continue during the forthcoming FSC session. As far as that topic is concerned, the FSC has long since turned into a platform for voicing the most absurd fabrications and propagandistic rhetoric by NATO and EU countries. Moreover, the opinion of the West is categorically presented as the only correct one. Our interlocutors are, in addition, concealing from the European public the facts of how the Ukrainian armed forces, supported by NATO and the European Union, are trampling upon the norms of international humanitarian law and using prohibited munitions against women and children. We will fill in these gaps during the forthcoming round of discussions.

I wish especially to draw attention to the fact that the collective West's refusal to properly discuss pressing issues related to European security – though for years we have been proposing here in Vienna a discussion on measures to de-escalate military tensions – must be seen against the context of the uninhibited military resupplying of the puppet regime in Kyiv that has been going on since 2014. Evidently, in the view of our Western interlocutors, that is what "striving for peace" is supposed to look like. The US Government is reportedly planning to hand over ATACMS long-range missile systems to its puppets, along with MQ-1C Gray Eagle and MQ-9 Reaper multipurpose unmanned aerial vehicles. We warn that appropriate response measures will not be long in coming. As you know full well, the weakening Western military machine will not be able to prevent the Russian army's combat success in the zone of the special operation.

The frenzied efforts by a number of Western OSCE participating States to isolate Russia are futile and will boomerang back at the instigators. On 12 September, on the margins of the Eastern Economic Forum, Pany Yathotou, Vice President of Laos, noted that the Russian economy continued to develop, and that Russia's role and influence in the world and the region in the process of constructing a multipolar world order were constantly growing stronger. Let me also cite some recent remarks by Marcel de Graaff, a Member of the European Parliament whose name should be familiar to you: "In fact Russia is already the big winner in this conflict with USA/NATO: de-dollarization, expanding Russian influence everywhere except in the West, growing economy, resilient against Western sanctions. Whereas the EU is already the big loser: economic recession, de-industrialization, exposed as US-lapdog, suicidal sanctions. The outcome of the G20 [summit] in India says it all: the West lost [its] power to coerce the rest of the world into compliance." At this point all that remains to be done is to recommend to our EU colleagues, who fancy themselves living in a "Garden of Eden" surrounded by a "pitch-dark jungle", that they peruse Anton Chekhov's play *The Cherry Orchard*, which ends with the thud of axes felling cherry trees. And the woodcutter in this case hails from the other side of the ocean – it is a fellow who "speaks softly and carries a big stick". Do you not think that it is time you came down from your dreams and faced up to the bitter truth?

Madam Chairperson,

Despite the deteriorating European security situation, what is called for today is an intellectual and practical pooling of efforts with a view to developing effective responses to the numerous threats of the contemporary age. That is why the Russian delegation has officially submitted for consideration by the Canadian Chairmanship a proposal on convening a plenary FSC meeting in the format of a Security Dialogue devoted to the politico-military challenges of European security, with the participation of high-ranking representatives of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), NATO and the European Union. As in the past, we regard the consideration of ways to achieve de-escalation and prevent dangerous military incidents to be a key objective. We will continue to seek to hold such an event, which would enable the Forum's extensive potential in times of crisis to be unlocked.

I cannot fail to mention the issue of inviting keynote speakers to FSC meetings, which has become a sore point. The persistent attempts by our Western colleagues to censor the participation of speakers who, in their opinion, do not meet certain Western criteria simply do not stand up to scrutiny. This year we have already seen how a representative of the CSTO Secretariat was denied access to the FSC. Such actions are unacceptable and run counter to the Platform for Co-operative Security adopted at the OSCE Istanbul Summit in 1999. We trust that the Canadian Chairmanship will regroup and show diplomatic wisdom by making this platform available for presenting the entire spectrum of opinions that exist "from Vancouver to Vladivostok".

In closing, allow me to emphasize that stemming the trends towards a crisis at the FSC is something that depends directly on, *inter alia*, Canada's endeavours as the holder of the Chairmanship. We, for our part, will make the necessary efforts to facilitate a substantive and inclusive dialogue on current security issues in the OSCE area. We reaffirm our willingness to engage in constructive co-operation, based on the principle of reciprocity, with you, Madam Chairperson, and with interested members of the FSC Troika.

We take this opportunity to welcome Cyprus as the incoming member of the Troika.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.