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THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1444th MEETING OF THE  
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

28 September 2023

**On the continued glorification of Nazism in Western countries**

Mr. Chairperson,

We are grateful to our Belarusian friends for raising this highly topical issue. Countering the glorification of Nazism is one of our country's priorities. Every year, Russia submits for consideration by the United Nations General Assembly a draft resolution on combating the glorification of Nazism, neo-Nazism and other practices that contribute to fuelling contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. That thematic document is geared towards co-operation and enjoys wide support from the global community.

The situation in this respect in Western countries and the countries under their tutelage is indeed deteriorating substantially. The glorification of Nazism must not be considered in isolation from other baleful phenomena. These are closely intertwined, and sometimes one unpunished evil spills over into another, taking on increasingly monstrous forms. Among the root causes we find the distortion of history and falsification of the USSR's role in securing victory over Nazism and creating the modern system of international relations. They also include efforts at historical revisionism and an attempt to interchange the originators of ideologies of racial purity with the State that opposed them.

To achieve these ends, much is being made of the absolute nature of certain human rights and freedoms – for instance, freedom of expression and freedom of assembly. Where this is leading to may be seen from the example of the United States of America: in early September, a gathering of neo-Nazis took place in the city of Orlando in Florida. The participants in that “jamboree” were shouting Nazi salutes and wearing patches emblazoned with swastikas. Among those present were also “admirers” of the far-right Azov battalion drawn from among local white supremacists.

All this is taking place against a backdrop of rising statistics related to anti-Semitic incidents. According to a recent report by the Anti-Defamation League, a non-governmental organization (NGO), the number of anti-Semitic incidents at US universities has doubled since the previous academic year. The latest data indicate that 665 incidents were recorded, including 9 instances of vandalism and 24 instances of harassment.

Encouraged by external forces, the authorities of some States are applying templates that were developed in Nazi Germany. Others are turning a blind eye to such manifestations and, at the same time, are glossing over unsavoury scenes from their own past involving the racist treatment of their colonies and elimination of the indigenous population. Consider, for example, the celebration mounted in the Canadian Parliament on 22 September this year in honour of the 98-year-old Banderite Yaroslav Hunka, who served as a volunteer in the Galicia SS Division. In our next statement we shall speak – in connection with how the bloody lessons of history are being ignored – about that outrageous incident, which is inconceivable for any right-minded person.

As we said at the start, the impunity enjoyed – and sometimes downright encouragement received – by adherents of the ideas of Adolf Hitler in certain OSCE participating States is triggering a steady rise in neo-Nazism, racism, various manifestations of xenophobia, and ethnic and religious intolerance. Let us turn to specific examples.

In early July this year, the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination issued concluding observations on France. In that statement the Committee expressed its concern over “the continuing practice of racial profiling combined with the excessive use of force by law enforcement officials ... particularly [against] people of African and Arab descent”. According to recent data from a reputed French NGO, the Representative Council of Black Associations (CRAN), nine in ten dark-skinned people are subjected to discrimination and, what is more, on a daily basis. The problems caused by racism are being ignored by the official authorities.

At the end of June this year, the Independent Expert Group on Anti-Muslim Sentiment published a report on the situation of the Muslim community in Germany. Its conclusions are depressing: at least one third of the followers of Islam living in that country have experienced hostility on account of their religion. Similar figures are reported by the German Interior Ministry. In early July, the head of that ministry, Nancy Faeser, noted that most of the country’s 5.5 million Muslims encountered discrimination in their day-to-day lives. Between January and April this year, 124 crimes with an anti-Islam motive were committed. They included attacks on mosques, incitement to hatred, bodily harm, insults, threats, damage to property and the use of symbols that go against the Constitution. Significantly, in his social media accounts, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz has called upon society to combat Islamophobia.

Neo-Nazism and Russophobia have become the norm not merely for the Kyiv regime but also for Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. The situation in those three countries has reached new heights of absurdity following the start of the Russian special military operation. We have repeatedly drawn attention to the total discrimination taking place against Russian and Russian-speaking people, to the eradication of the Soviet historical and memorial heritage, and to the veritable war that is being waged against phantoms of the dead. In Estonia, the police prohibited residents of Narva from celebrating the day of their city’s liberation from the Nazis on 26 July, given that “forbidden symbols” would be used there on that “significant memorable day in Russian history”. Let us explain what this is about. In that participating State, fines have become more frequent for displaying a symbol of victory over Nazism, namely the ribbon of Saint George, which has basically been declared an “enemy symbol”. In early August, the Lithuanian authorities again refused a request from the country’s Jewish community for a stone commemorating Juozas Krikštaponis, an accomplice of the Nazis, to be dismantled. According to a statement by the President of the Jewish Community of Lithuania, Faina Kukliansky, “his complicity in the Holocaust is indisputable. As we mark the 80th anniversary of the anti-Nazi resistance and the liquidation of the Vilnius ghetto, that monument is an affront to the memory of all the victims and their loved ones.”

The authorities in the three Baltic countries are actively working towards the creation of mono-ethnic societies anchored on the titular ethnic groups, thereby flagrantly violating the rights of the Russian and

Russian-speaking minority. Every conceivable effort is being made to completely squeeze out the Russian language and Russian culture from all spheres of life, and at the same time to force Russian citizens out of those countries. In mid-September, the President of Lithuania, Gitanas Nausėda, signed a decree stripping figure skater Margarita Drobiazko of her Lithuanian citizenship for having taken part in popular Russian ice dancing shows. This decision is a gross violation not only of local legislation but of international and European human rights standards as well.

In Latvia, more than 3,000 Russian citizens find themselves at risk of deportation. The racist nature of the regime in charge there is also evidenced by the tragic situation relating to migrants. According to a recent report by the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture, migrants trying to cross the Latvian-Belarusian border are systematically subjected to inhuman treatment in Latvia. More than 100 people have been identified who were tortured, beaten up and unlawfully detained by Latvian border guards and police officers. No measures are being taken to rectify the situation. On the contrary, Latvian immigration laws are being cynically tightened up and volunteers are facing criminal prosecution, while the powers of border guards are being widened.

We call upon the OSCE participating States to stop encouraging the glorification of Nazism and neo-Nazism, not least within their own borders, to abstain from rewriting history and to begin fulfilling their international obligations. OSCE officials should start responding appropriately to manifestations of racism, racial discrimination and neo-Nazism.

Thank you for your attention.