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FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE
OSCE ANNUAL SECURITY REVIEW CONFERENCE**

28 June 2022

Mr. Chairperson,
Colleagues,

In his address at the 25th St. Petersburg International Economic Forum on 17 June, Russian President Vladimir Putin emphasized that we are witnesses to “tectonic changes in geopolitics, in the global economy, in the technological sphere and in the entire system of international relations, where the role of dynamic, forward-looking States and regions is increasing significantly. And it is impossible to ignore their interests any longer.” The President stressed that there would be no return to the old formula for relations between Russia and the West.

This is also true for the OSCE. The Organization lies in tatters. The reason is that the Western bloc, the European Union and NATO, indistinguishable from each other in their belligerence, are stubbornly trying to replace universal norms with the notorious “rules-based order”.

If you want to bury the OSCE, continue in this vein.

The arrogant Polish way of doing things has discredited the institution of the Chairperson-in-Office. If Poland is unable to curb its anti-Russian instinct, it should voluntarily relinquish its mandate and hand it over to the OSCE Secretariat, although it too regularly violates the rules of proper management. We also draw the attention of the incoming Chairmanship, North Macedonia, to this. Refusing to have contact and work normally with one or more participating States makes it impossible to resolve security problems. Against this backdrop, there are increasing doubts in Russian society as to the usefulness of the OSCE’s continued existence – it merely watches helplessly as the pan-European space becomes fragmented.

The West does not want to admit that the reason for our special military operation in Ukraine has been the refusal over a period of many years to take into account Russia’s legitimate security interests – self-confidence, neocolonial ambitions and an ignorance of history hinder this. With the support and at the behest of its Western sponsors, the Ukrainian Government is waging a war “down to the last Ukrainian”. The strategy of the Ukrainian armed forces is disgusting – the use of civilians as human shields, the destruction of civilian objects, “scorched earth” in the abandoned territories, disregard for the fate of civilians, and the torture and execution of prisoners of war. The impossibility of a military success is

pushing the Ukrainian Government into terrorism; its victims are exclusively civilians who are working to build a normal life. I am referring to the recent terrorist attacks in the Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions.

The countries loudly accusing Russia have been “training Ukraine for war for eight years” (as the United States of America admits). They are supplying the Ukrainian Government with increasingly lethal weapons and sending instructors and mercenaries. They are deliberately dragging out the conflict in order to inflict maximum damage on Russia. Make no mistake: your sanctions are hitting all the peoples of continental Europe. And things are far from rosy across the Atlantic. Ukraine is increasingly being referred to as a “kamikaze State”. It is used as expendable material. In 2008, they pushed the deranged Mikheil Saakashvili into a suicidal adventure. Now they have made Ukraine a bargaining chip. Who is going to be sacrificed next in an attempt to regain the dominance they had in a unipolar world?

Extremism, whether it be Islamist, radical right-wing or of the “Glory to Ukraine” variety, always boomerangs back to its masterminds. Extremists will also make use of NATO weapons, which are already spreading around the world. The denazification and demilitarization of the Kyiv regime will be accomplished.

We warn against new staged events and provocations aimed at stirring up the Western public opinion’s waning interest in Ukraine. The staged operation in Bucha, the shelling of the railway station in Kramatorsk by a Ukrainian Tochka-U missile. There is no shortage of examples. The lies of the Western media mainstream are off the scale. The world has grown tired of Colin Powell’s test tubes. Even if you ban all media outlets except those that writhe about in the Procrustean bed of the Western official line, the truth will still come out. The crimes of the Ukrainian military and nationalists are being documented. A tribunal will take place for them. Trying their handlers would also be the right thing to do.

The Ukrainization of the entire OSCE agenda is a mistake. The Chairmanship is undermining the programmatic work on non-military aspects of security. It is postponing and cancelling key high-level events. It is blocking substantive dialogue on transnational threats: on combating terrorism and ensuring border security and cybersecurity. It is as if the drug threat has ceased to exist altogether.

We are observing a *de facto* paralysis of agreed negotiation formats, such as the Geneva International Discussions on Security and Stability in the Trans-Caucasus and the “5+2” Transnistrian settlement mechanism. They have been sacrificed for political expediency. France and the United States have caused irreparable damage to the format of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs and undone thirty years of efforts to find ways of solving the problems connected with the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. The interests of restoring peace and ensuring security and sustainable development in the South Caucasus should not be influenced by Russophobic sentiments in Washington, D.C., and Paris.

The responsibility of the European Union, some of its Member States and Switzerland is indisputable. The use of visa and transport obstacles to block dialogue speaks for itself. The need to move regular meetings, in particular the Geneva Discussions, from Geneva to a more appropriate venue is not a whim of ours, but an objective condition for normal operations. The situation with other OSCE events is similar. It is impossible to ensure the safe and equal participation of representatives of all countries in human dimension events in Warsaw. The Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights has definitively and irrevocably lost its impartiality and is mired in Russophobia. It promotes an exclusively Western view of human rights, using them as a tool for exerting pressure on countries that follow a sovereign path and adhere to traditional values. The United Kingdom arrogantly denies visas to Russian parliamentarians to attend the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly’s Annual Session – Europe’s oldest democracy did not give a damn about its international obligations. The Parliamentary Assembly leadership also looks ridiculous – they undertook to organize the meeting, but are unable to ensure that it takes place as it should.

We understand that many are uncomfortable listening to our analysis, let alone admitting their mistakes. Obviously, there is also the fear of deviating from the “general line” – they will be classed as outcasts. In this regard, it is useful to remember that the value of the OSCE lies in its inclusive and diverse composition. There are enough European Union and NATO platforms for Western anti-Russian gatherings.

Confrontation is not something we chose ourselves. We prefer political and diplomatic methods, and propose coming to an understanding. Once there was talk of joint NATO-Russia peacekeeping, of a mutually beneficial comprehensive partnership agreement with the European Union. For 30 years, we believed in the possibility of a “common European home” and, for eight years, we hoped for a peaceful solution to the Ukrainian crisis through the Minsk agreements. We were not heard. Now everyone will have to live in a different, harsher reality.

Geography is a stubborn, irrevocable thing. We have neighbours not only in the east and in the south, but also in the west. Objective common interests have not disappeared, they have even become more evident against the backdrop of global crises. At some point, new rules for conflict-free coexistence will have to be worked out. The OSCE and its toolkit may prove useful from this perspective, although it is by no means certain.

The distance between the conference in Helsinki in 1975 and the present day is enormous. Fifty years ago, neutral and non-aligned countries had considerable combined weight and authority, played a crucial role in maintaining stability and ensuring communication between the key players in the international arena, and enjoyed well-deserved trust. Whether we can now regard Helsinki as an appropriate platform for anchoring the future status quo in Europe is the current big question.

Thank you for your attention.