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Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY
MS. IULIA ZHDANOVA, ACTING HEAD OF THE DELEGATION OF THE
RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS ON MILITARY
SECURITY AND ARMS CONTROL, AT THE 1094th PLENARY MEETING OF
THE OSCE FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION**

11 December 2024

**On the discussion of the agenda for the 1094th Plenary Meeting of the
OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation**

Mr. Chairperson,

In accordance with paragraph IV.1(C)4 of the Rules of Procedure of the OSCE, the delegation of the Russian Federation does not join the consensus on the adoption of the agenda for the 1094th Plenary Meeting of the OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC).

We cannot give our consent to its being held in view of how the issues regarding the 1091st Plenary Meeting of the FSC remain unresolved, and of how the bogus journals of the 1092nd and 1093rd Plenary Meetings, which were in effect replaced with illegitimate get-togethers at the instigation of the delegation of Denmark, remain valid. And, most importantly, the main problem has as yet not been solved, namely the fact that the fundamental principle of consensus has not been borne out in practice during this round of negotiations at the Forum.

In order to overcome the procedural and political crisis at the FSC triggered by the Danish delegation's destructive actions aimed at breaking with consensus when adopting agendas for plenary meetings, we have been holding bilateral consultations over the course of several weeks, with the delegation of Switzerland participating as an observer. The Russian delegation was ready to compromise and proposed viable formulas. A matter of principle for us was to have what is going on at the FSC reflected objectively and to set down in writing a commitment to the key premises of its work as enshrined in the Rules of Procedure of the OSCE.

It thus more or less proved possible to find mutually acceptable solutions as regards the journal of the 1091st Plenary Meeting. However, when discussing possible solutions regarding the 1092nd and 1093rd Plenary Meetings, the flexibility and fortitude of the Danish delegation gave way to pusillanimity and presumption.

We insist that the aforementioned two journals should (on the basis of paragraph IV.1(C)4 of the Rules of Procedure) record that these meetings were not held because of a lack of consensus. However, the

delegation of Denmark decided that it was acceptable to dispense with a key principle for the Organization and continued insisting that the aforementioned plenary meetings were held in accordance with the letter of the OSCE. All our subsequent attempts to make our Danish colleagues see reason turned out to be futile. What is more, Russia's calls for wisdom to be demonstrated and for the existing discrepancies in journals of plenary meetings to be resolved in the run-up to the closing session of the FSC were interpreted by them as threats that hindered the search for a compromise. In these circumstances, we were obliged to issue a warning that we would not join any consensus on the agenda for the 1094th Plenary Meeting.

With regard to the procedure for adopting the FSC agenda, we should once again like to recall that:

- The complete agenda, including the standing items mentioned in paragraph IV.1(C)1 of the Rules of Procedure of the OSCE and any other items as appropriate, is to be agreed upon in its entirety by the Forum at the beginning of the meeting (paragraph IV.1(C)4). Since the FSC is a decision-making body (paragraph II(B)7), such adoption occurs in token of the absence of “any” objection expressed by a participating State. The Rules of Procedure do not contain the requirement that a participating State must give reasons for its objection.
- FSC meetings take place, “as a rule”, once a week (paragraph IV.2(C)1). This in itself implies that exceptions are possible, too.
- The Helsinki Document 1992 and subsequent OSCE Ministerial Council decisions mentioned previously by the Chairmanship and a number of delegations are of a general nature, defining the structures of the Organization's bodies and their mandate. They are not directly applicable to the procedure for the conduct of plenary meetings. Purely procedural matters are governed by the Rules of Procedure in the current version of 1 November 2006. In case of contradiction with OSCE decisions adopted earlier, the Rules of Procedure take precedence, as is stated most clearly in paragraph VII.1 thereof.

We insist that the Forum return to normalcy and comply strictly with the Rules of Procedure, and that the rotating Chairmanships respect the rights of sovereign OSCE participating States. Attempts to call into question, circumvent or violate the consensus principle endanger the viability not only of the FSC as an autonomous decision-making body, but also of the Organization as a whole. Everyone, including future FSC Chairmanships, must be very clear about this and not allow great wrongs of this kind to happen.