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FSC.DEL/160/24
14 May 2024

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO THE
VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS ON MILITARY SECURITY AND ARMS CONTROL AT
THE 1076th PLENARY MEETING OF THE OSCE FORUM FOR
SECURITY CO-OPERATION**

8 May 2024

Subject: On the Croatian Chairmanship's discriminatory practices

Mr. Chairperson,

Almost two weeks ago, the Russian delegation, on the basis of paragraph IV.2(C)5 of the Rules of Procedure of the OSCE, officially requested you to grant students from the Moscow State Institute of International Relations of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs access to the 1076th Plenary Meeting of the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) as observers attending remotely.

Those present in this room know very well that the practice of inviting to the FSC, in consultation with the rotating Chairmanship, students from military academies and higher education institutions in the field of international security has been going on in our Forum for decades, and that this practice makes a tangible contribution to raising young specialists' awareness of the work of this autonomous OSCE decision-making body. However, that apparently does not fit in with the plans of the Croatian Chairmanship, which blocked this opportunity for Russian students of international relations.

We reject the argument made by our Croatian colleagues that visitors invited to FSC meetings must attend these exclusively in person. Given that the EU countries have suspended the Agreement with the Russian Federation on the facilitation of the issuance of visas, that argument strikes us as irrelevant.

The way in which discriminatory, restrictive measures are being imposed at the FSC against students is a clear sign of weakness and primitive Russophobia on the part of the Croatian Chairmanship, and also on the part of those Western delegations that lobbied for this decision, thereby making young people pay the price of their politicized squabbles. We express our firm opposition to the line taken by our Croatian colleagues, which is inconsistent with the principles of balance and impartiality, brings the FSC into disrepute and is, in general, having an extremely negative impact on the functioning of our Organization's politico-military dimension.

In these circumstances we reserve the right to take measures in response. In particular, from now on we shall be scrutinizing in each individual case the names of those put forward as observers/visitors and will make our opinion known on the appropriateness of their being present at a plenary meeting of the FSC.

Should the Russian delegation's opinion not be taken into account by the Chairmanship team, you know what consequences to expect.

We urge the Croatian Chairmanship to forgo discriminatory practices, which run counter to the Charter of the United Nations, and to ensure equal working conditions for all participating States without exception.

Thank you for your attention.