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**STATEMENT BY
MR. MAXIM BUYAKEVICH, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF
THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1475th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

23 May 2024

On the increasing military involvement of certain NATO and EU member States in further confrontation in and around Ukraine

Madam Chairperson,

Last week, shelling attacks by the Kyiv regime's armed formations resulted in at least 135 civilian casualties: 20 people were killed, including a child, and 115 people were injured, among them seven minors. A civilian car with a family inside was attacked in the Belgorod region, claiming the lives of a woman and a four-year-old child. In the city of Belgorod itself, an 11-year-old girl was injured by the explosion of a drone that flew in through the window of an apartment in a residential tower block. Such strikes on the civilian population cannot be called indiscriminate – they are targeted attacks consciously being carried out against civilians.

We are indignant at the fact that such violations of the norms of international humanitarian law are not eliciting condemnation from the OSCE leadership. The children who have died and been maimed at the hands of the Kyiv regime's armed formations do not deserve to be the subject of political speculations and double standards.

In a recent interview with Reuters, the leader of the Kyiv regime once again lied and said that the Ukrainian formations were not using Western weapons to carry out strikes against Russian territory. We must emphasize that instances are regularly recorded of such weapons being used against the Belgorod region, and also in Donbas and the Dnieper Lowland. Volodymyr Zelenskyy's pronouncements are sheer disinformation, made in an attempt to coax new supplies out of the West. In addition, emissaries from the Kyiv regime have intensified negotiation efforts with a view to getting the green light for the use of NATO weapons over an even broader geographical area.

Russian military personnel are conducting effective operations to degrade the combat capabilities of the Kyiv regime's formations. Tactically important troop advances are taking place in the historical Sloboda region and in Donbas. Moreover, in response to provocations by a number of NATO countries and attempts to use the territory of Ukraine to generate and project threats directed against the inhabitants of our country, the first step of an exercise on the preparation and use of non-strategic nuclear weapons commenced on

21 May. We stress that the sponsors of that neo-Nazi regime must realize the attendant risks and the consequences of the armed escalation they are engaged in.

From the latest meeting of several Western countries on military supplies for the Kyiv regime, which was held on 20 May, it is clear that its sponsors do not have any weapons for the regime that would be capable of bringing about a fundamental change in the situation on the ground. The decisions adopted on sending new shipments of weapons that have already been approved for battlefield use will merely lead to the armed confrontation being dragged out, to further casualties and destruction. That the Kyiv regime's formations have no chance of achieving a breakthrough has also been admitted by the Secretary of the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine, Oleksandr Lytvynenko, in a recent interview with the *Financial Times*.

Against this backdrop, the Kyiv regime has once again confirmed that the substantial volumes of funding earmarked by the United States of America for the prolongation of the Ukrainian conflict are nothing but a means for the United States to remedy its own economic situation at the expense of Ukrainian lives. In an interview with ABC, the regime's leader said: "That money is not given to Ukraine. It's money spent in American factories, creating American jobs."

After legislative measures ramping up mobilization entered into force in Ukraine on 18 May, representatives of several municipal authorities made statements on the dismal situation at the local level. In Dnipropetrovsk, Mykolaiv and other cities there is a very real threat of public transport and intercity traffic coming to a halt, of disruptions to the operation of public utilities and critical infrastructure facilities or these even ceasing to operate altogether. What is to blame for all this are by no means Russian strikes on military objectives belonging to the Kyiv regime, but the forced mobilization of men from various professions who are being sent off to be slaughtered for the sake of prolonging the conflict and creating jobs in the United States and European countries.

The West's unsuccessful economic policy with regard to Russia under the pretext of the developments in and around Ukraine, the failed sanctions blitzkrieg and the need to face up to reality are forcing even the most biased Western institutes to revise their economic forecasts for Russia. For example, over in the European Commission they have not only described the growth of Russia's economy in 2023 as "a surprisingly strong rebound" but have also revised upwards the forecast for our country's gross domestic product growth this year by a factor of more than two, namely from 1.6 to 2.9 per cent. Incidentally, this is even higher than the current forecast by the Russian Ministry of Economic Development (2.8 per cent). The experts at the International Monetary Fund have done the same after studying the indicators of Russia's economic performance in the first quarter of this year. In this context, assessments are now to be heard from officials in Hungary, Bulgaria, Slovakia and several other countries about the West's failed course in pursuing confrontation with our country, about the mistakenness of the strategy chosen with regard to Ukraine, including the tactic of seeking to suffocate Russia economically through the pressure of sanctions.

In the leading political centres of the West, there would seem to be a recognition of how baleful and futile the aforementioned strategy is, and yet they continue to aggravate the situation, disregarding the risks that this entails for economic and financial stability. Highly destructive steps have been taken by the leaders of Western countries as they set about stealing Russian sovereign assets for the sake of giving military succour to the Kyiv regime in its death throes. We stress that, no matter what pseudo-legal constructs are invoked to justify such actions, this is a situation in which the theft of assets is being officially used as an instrument of aggressive foreign policy. The decision approved by the EU leadership on 21 May (it comes into effect today) is a stain on the reputation of the Brussels bloc; it is bound to have consequences not only as regards retaliatory measures by Russia, but also for the economic climate in the European Union as a whole. There can be no doubt that investors from all over the world will in future take this behaviour by the

EU authorities into account when making decisions as to whether to hold assets in the jurisdiction of the European Union.

One further point. The problem of neo-Nazism as the Kyiv regime's main ideological pillar is being deliberately hushed up in the West, as is the fact that individuals holding right-wing extremist views are to be found within the ranks of the Ukrainian armed formations. By the way, the German Federal Government was compelled, under a parliamentary procedure, to issue an official explanation on 8 May, from which it transpires that the Kyiv regime has been sending individuals with right-wing extremist ideas to Germany for military training. No fewer than seven Ukrainians sporting the associated symbols have been sent back to Ukraine by the German authorities. This despite the fact that the German Government organizes special courses for the newly arrived to enlighten them on the meaning of Nazi symbols. Moreover, the German military personnel who are involved in training them are being drilled to recognize and identify such symbols among their Ukrainian charges. This raises the following question: if the problem does not exist, if the presence of neo-Nazis in the ranks of the Ukrainian armed forces is nothing but "Russian propaganda and disinformation" (as Western representatives are claiming in this room), then why does the Bundeswehr have to hold special courses on detecting Nazi symbols among members of the Ukrainian armed formations?

In reality, it is quite obvious that sober minds in the West are perfectly aware that the problem of neo-Nazism in Ukraine is all too real. And in the Kyiv regime's armed formations, too, there are neo-Nazis. It is also clear that there are problems with regard to democratic institutions and procedures, given that power has in effect been usurped by a criminal regime that has suspended elections at all levels, that has excluded the population of Ukraine from the decision-making process for existential decisions concerning the country, that has crushed the opposition, and that continues to clamp down on dissent and to trample upon the political, religious, linguistic, cultural and other rights of ordinary Ukrainians. However, in what is a glaring demonstration of double standards, all this is politically acceptable to the West, since the Kyiv regime and its neo-Nazi outfits are being sponsored and used by the NATO and EU countries as a tool for combating Russian statehood and generating additional threats to our national security.

With a view to maintaining the support for such a regime, its sponsors are seeking to tout, on behalf of the entire international community, ultimatums taking the guise of "peace formulas". As is known, an absolutely pointless thematic conference is planned to be held in Switzerland this June. What is essentially being proposed is to, as it were, embalm stillborn ideas there – ideas that do not take Russia's security interests into account – and to use that as a basis for calling for the hostilities to continue and for the conflict to be dragged out. Not surprisingly, the countries from the Global South have already voiced scepticism as regards taking part in that gathering.

We emphasize that the path towards a real, sustainable resolution of the current issues by political and diplomatic means must run through a complete cessation of arms supplies by NATO countries to the Kyiv regime and through a stop being put to the recruitment on their territory of Ukrainian and foreign citizens into the ranks of the Ukrainian armed forces and neo-Nazi outfits. It is important to ensure the withdrawal of all foreign mercenaries, instructors and operators of NATO weapons from Ukrainian territory, to see to it that other activities aimed at maintaining and developing the criminal armed formations' combat capability are wound down, and also to enable the demilitarization and denazification of Ukraine.

Thank you for your attention.