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Press release on Ukraine crisis

Yesterday, on March 2, Ukrainian saboteurs committed an outrageous terrorist attack in two border villages in the Bryansk Region of Russia. We strongly condemn that act. The terrorists penetrated Russian territory, killed two civilians, and seriously wounded an 11-year-old boy.

Ukrainian officials have repeatedly acknowledged that all their actions are carried out with the approval and support of the United States and other NATO countries. The killings in the Bryansk Region were committed with NATO weapons. This raises a legitimate question about classifying those states as accomplices to such crimes and as sponsors of terrorism.

We have drawn appropriate conclusions from what happened. Russian investigative bodies have opened an investigation. This crime will not go unpunished.

February 26 marked nine years since the beginning of the Crimean Spring, which culminated in a referendum and the subsequent reunification of Crimea with Russia.

The starting point of these historical events was the anti-constitutional armed coup in Kiev orchestrated by the West. Its driving force was radical nationalists, who never hid their aggressive anti-Russia attitudes. Having come to power, they began to impose their own order and ideology. All dissenters were severely punished. For example, Right Sector militants attacked buses carrying 300 anti-Maidan protesters returning from Kiev to Crimea in the early hours of February 21, 2014, near Korsun-Shevchenkivsky, Cherkasy Region. Those people were brutally beaten, doused with petrol, and threatened to be burned alive. Even back then it became clear what awaited the peninsula and its residents.

Naturally, the Crimeans did not want to put up with rampant radical nationalism and opposed the new authorities. On February 26, 2014, the leaders of the so-called Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar people, who supported the Kiev putschists, gathered an aggressive crowd in Simferopol and attempted to seize the Supreme Council of Crimea. The Maidan government sent so-called

friendship trains with fighters from nationalist organisations to “help” the extremists drown Crimea in Russian blood, as the Right Sector leader, Dmitry Yarosh, put it. However, the trains never reached Crimea, and the radicals were afraid to step on Crimean land.

Further escalation of tension with unpredictable consequences was avoided thanks to the peninsula residents themselves, who stood up to defend their homes, and the Russian military from the Black Sea Fleet units, legally deployed in Crimea, who came to their aid.

In the referendum held on March 16, 2014, the people of Crimea voted almost unanimously for its return to its native harbour. The question of Russian sovereignty over the peninsula was settled once and for all.

Today, the Kiev regime continues to plan a military seizure of Crimea and strikes against it, obviously unconcerned about the lives of the Russian civilians. US Under Secretary of State Victoria Nuland, speaking at the Carnegie Centre recently, called military facilities in the Russian Crimea “legitimate targets” for Ukraine. It seems that Washington is trying to earn additional votes in the upcoming election through this Crimean campaign.

Against the backdrop of the Ukrainian leadership’s aggressive statements regarding Crimea, the media reports that Kiev authorities would like to present Russian and Belarusian citizens in Ukraine with the following choice: either join the Armed Forces of Ukraine and fight, or be deported. Obviously, this issue would have arisen sooner or later. We believe that sober-minded Russians and Belarusians in Ukraine also realised this. We are ready to accommodate all victims of the Kiev regime in Russia.

On February 26, Ukraine published new lists sanctioning Russian citizens and organisations. They include businessperson Yevgeny Prigozhin, his relatives and companies affiliated with him, as well as a number of Russian charitable and public organisations, athletes, sport officials and children’s rights commissioners. It appears that Kiev is vying with the United States and other Western countries, as to who will sanction more Russian citizens. Interestingly enough, the Kiev regime is introducing restrictive measures for a period of 50 years more and more often; this probably reflects its assessments of how long the conflict will last.

Representatives of the Kiev regime marked the first anniversary of launching the special military operation with another barrage of anti-Russia statements. In an interview with the German publication Focus, Prime Minister Denis Shmygal said Ukrainian-Russian reconciliation was impossible in the next 100 years. Speaking at a meeting of the UN Security Council, Ukrainian Foreign

Minister Dmitry Kuleba referred to Russia's UNSC membership as the greatest diplomatic fraud of the 20th century. At the same time, Vladimir Zelensky continues to promote his so-called "peace formula" that aims to forge an anti-Russia coalition, rather than establish peace.

Washington and its NATO allies continue to consistently implement their geopolitical plans for destroying Russia. For this purpose, they are saturating Ukraine with weapons even more actively, training Ukrainian service personnel and helping their Kiev charges choose specific targets and an axis of attack.

On the first anniversary of launching the special military operation, US authorities announced a new military aid package worth \$2 billion for Ukraine, due to include several types of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), including the upgraded Switchblade 600 kamikaze drone, the Cyber Lux K8 aviation complex, ammunition for HIMARS multiple launch rocket systems, laser-guided missile systems, 155-mm artillery shells, mine-disposal equipment and radio-electronic countermeasure systems. Washington does not conceal the fact that this custom-made equipment will be ordered from manufacturers, and this means that the Armed Forces of Ukraine will continue to be strengthened in the long-term. This is also confirmed by the readiness to continue training Ukrainian service personnel in the United States and other NATO countries for as long as it takes.

By supplying high-tech weapons to Ukraine, the United States and other NATO countries are turning it into their personal laboratory and a testing ground for their military R&D.

We took note of Washington's recent decision to tighten control over US arms supplies to foreign countries, where US weaponry should not be used to commit acts of genocide, crimes against humanity, or violations of international humanitarian law. But if these weapons are employed in US interests in Ukraine, Washington would close its eyes to it. In the special military operation zone, Ukrainian units fire from American weapons at civilians, or use them as a human shield. The same weapons are used to kill prisoners of war.

During all these years, the collective West, which nurtured the neo-Nazi Kiev regime, has turned it into an obedient tool whereby it is trying in vain to inflict a strategic defeat on Russia. Today, the Western countries are urging Kiev to continue offensive operations and occupy the new Russian regions, although they feel that their plans are doomed to fail. They are indifferent to the fact that this policy will take a toll of thousands of innocent lives.

It is clear that the special military operation will continue until it achieves the full de-Nazification and demilitarisation of Ukraine and eliminates all the

security threats coming from its territory.



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