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## **Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov' opening remarks at a working meeting with senior executives of the Russian media, Moscow, December 26, 2022**

Friends,

In addition to our regular communication in connection with foreign policy events, it has become a good tradition for us to engage, in the run-up to the New Year, in a free and lively exchange of what is happening around the world and the place the Russian Federation has in these processes.

I don't think there's a need for a lengthy introduction. President Vladimir Putin has repeatedly conveyed his assessment of the ongoing developments in the most detailed manner. He outlined the policy of the Russian Federation at a time when the collective West has completely discredited itself as a negotiating partner and, most importantly, Russia's policy concerning the implementation of political or legal agreements.

Francis Fukuyama said 30 years ago that the end of history had come, by which he meant the overwhelming dominance of liberal ideology, democracy, and that way of life and the disappearance of socialism which was the competing world system. He was ridiculed and they were saying he was wrong and there was no need to make rash forecasts.

If you look at the Biden administration's policies now, it becomes clear that they want the "end of history" to take place, not just in the works of political analysts, scientists or pundits, but in real life as well. Everything that we are now witnessing in Europe in its broadest sense and on other continents, where US "messengers" want every country to take an anti-Russia position, to join the sanctions and to keep from talking with Russian representatives reflects an attempt to establish the end of history and the final and irreversible dominance of the "golden billion." President Vladimir Putin has talked about this more than once.

These vain attempts are anti-historical and are aimed at stopping and suppressing the objective formation of a multipolar world. The course of history cannot be stopped. There is no end to history and there never will be. Humanity has more than once gone through many attempts to subjugate it that were

undertaken by different forces, which wanted to dictate everything to everyone. It will play out the same way this time as well.

Many countries and politicians (there are not many of them in the United States, but they do exist and are trying to make their point of view known publicly in a vocal manner) are aware of the dead-end nature of this kind of policy and the fact that there is no alternative to building neighbourly relations on this planet (which is a relatively small place) which implies taking into account each other's interests, living side by side without trying to subjugate their neighbours or countries that are 10,000 miles away.

This is what the Americans did when it “suddenly” occurred to them that a threat to their security came from Yugoslavia led by Slobodan Milosevic, Iraq led by Saddam Hussein or Libya with Muammar Gaddafi at the helm. The above countries were prosperous nations, a fact that did not sit well with the Western understanding of liberal democracy. They were autocratic, if not dictatorial countries. But this does not make things any easier for more than a million civilians who died as a result of Western aggression. The socioeconomic situations in Iraq and Libya were two of the best in the region. Where are these countries now? As states, they have not yet been “rebuilt” in full.

Every other region of the world where the Americans have tried to “bring things up to code” has experienced similar sad and tragic consequences. They withdrew from Afghanistan overnight after 20 years of “rule.” They fled leaving the country in ruins and plagued by terrorist and drug threats that actually multiplied on the US’s watch. Everyone is aware of the fact that US soldiers teamed up with drug lords and engaged in sending drugs to Europe from Afghanistan.

The Americans did not build a single industrial enterprise in Afghanistan during these 20 years. The situation is further aggravated by the fact that the United States took about \$10 billion from the previous government and does not plan to give this money back. Or, they will give it back if the Taliban again lets the Americans in to establish their military presence on their territory. Washington is preoccupied with this.

We should think more about ourselves. The things that President Vladimir Putin said are already being acted on by our ministry and the Government.

We can no longer rely on these people. Neither our people nor history will forgive us if we do. We must do our best to make sure that we have an independent public governance system when it comes to critical industries and technologies. Over the months of the special military operation and over the past years, when serious sanctions were imposed on Russia, we identified setbacks in

our own development and instances where we too openly and naively put our faith in the assurances that we heard in the early 1990s about a common European home and the need for an international division of labour that would rely on the best performance and competitive advantages of each country, so that, by pulling our efforts together and saving resources, we would be able achieve the best and cost-effective results. All of that was empty talk.

As the President said, the true interests of the West are in continuing colonial and neo-colonial policies where it looks to cheat, to grab a bigger piece for itself, and to make sure that the dollar, which is reproduced in the trillions in pieces of green paper, retains its financial dominance. Then, these green pieces of paper are widely used to create a situation on the global food and fertiliser markets that the West (primarily the United States) needs. Whenever we are told that we need to look for solutions and compromises we no longer find this rhetoric convincing.

Speaking of compromises, during his “triumphant” visit to the United States, President of Ukraine Vladimir Zelensky said that a just peace means no compromises whatsoever. This is exactly what his handlers are guided by: no compromises and dictating their own will. Therefore, they need to defeat Russia not only on the battlefield, but also deal a strategic defeat to Russia so that nobody ever tries to follow in our steps. This is what makes this period stand apart. The vast majority of countries see and understand this very well. It takes time to get rid of these dollar-oriented “fettters” aimed at ensuring the perpetual functioning of the global development mechanisms created by the West and servicing the global economy. Almost every country became bogged down in this “system” too deeply during the post-war period, when these tools and mechanisms were still considered promising and suitable for everyone who was responsible for balancing the interests of states. The process of realising the risks and threats arising from this dependence is going on at a fast pace.

Rest assured that in the near future, we will see a serious drop in the West’s ability to “steer” the global economy the way it pleases. Whether it wants it or not, it will have to sit down and talk.

We are not going to chase the West. They tore up most of our relationships. We do have other countries with which we can develop cooperation in the economy, social, cultural affairs and sports. We will deal with the countries that never failed us, the countries with which we managed to reach complex compromises, and when they were effectively reached, no one ever tried to cheat anyone. When it comes to the West, things are exactly the other way round.



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