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Statement by Permanent Representative Vassily Nebenzia at UNSC briefing on Ukraine

10–12 minutes

29 December 2023

Mr. President,

We are not in the least surprised by the rushed decision of Zelensky's regime and its Western sponsors to request this meeting. Many experts predicted that the Kiev clique, which is rapidly losing on the front and is losing support even in the West, will use any pretext to draw upon itself the attention of the global community.

However, you have chosen an unfortunate occasion, because if there is anything to talk about today, it is exclusively about the actions of Ukrainian air defense systems deployed in residential areas of Ukrainian cities in violation of international humanitarian law. Social media users from Ukraine have no doubts about this and do not hesitate to warn their fellow citizens. They also post more and more videos of Russian missiles and drones hitting military infrastructure and weapons depots, causing a characteristic detonation, while Ukrainian air defense missiles, having missed target or strayed off course, fall on residential

houses and peaceful infrastructure. Or the damage may be caused by debris falling in residential areas solely because Ukrainian air defense systems are stationed there. That was the case with the Transfiguration Cathedral in Odessa, the destruction of which they tried to attribute to Russia. The same thing happened this morning in Kiev, Odessa, Lvov, Kharkov, Dnepropetrovsk and other cities which reported casualties.

The representative of the United Kingdom stated peremptorily that there would have been more casualties if it had not been for the work of Ukrainian air defense. It is hard to imagine greater cynicism. But for the work of Ukrainian air defenses, there would have been simply no civilian casualties. We would therefore advise caution against the UK's announcement to supply Kiev with 100 more air defense missiles, the use of which kills civilians. The Nazi regime is ready to kill not only the inhabitants of Donbas with Western weapons and the same air defense missiles, but also kill its own citizens in their homes and at peaceful objects.

If Ukraine had not violated IHL, there would have been no casualties despite the truly massive strikes that Russian Armed Forces launched yesterday and today against military facilities throughout Ukraine: military-industrial facilities, military airfield infrastructure, arsenals; as well as storage sites for artillery ammunition, unmanned boats, weapons and fuel for military equipment; and places where Ukrainian military personnel, nationalist formations and foreign mercenaries are stationed. This is obvious not only to experts but also to any unbiased observer.

For example, here is [link](#) to a video of today's hit on a residential building in Kiev, which shows a burning object falling slowly on the house. Only the upper floors of the house were damaged. An

impact missile does not fly at such a speed and along such a trajectory. Obviously, this is the consequences of the work of Ukrainian air defense.

For comparison, here is a [link](#) to another video of an Israeli missile hitting an apartment building in Khan Younis in southern Gaza Strip today. It shows not only the moment the missile hit, but also the fact that only ruins remain of the multistoried building. One can only imagine the number of victims of this barbaric targeted strike (which is one of dozens that hit Gaza daily) but that is certainly no reason for our Western colleagues to call urgent meetings of the Security Council.

And here is a [link](#) to another photo from Ukrainian social media, taken after a hit on a high-rise building in Lvov. It shows that all the walls of the building are covered with traces left by submunitions of air defense missiles that had hit the building. Dozens if not hundreds of such photos and videos have been posted on the web today. They have been posted by Ukrainians who are outraged not only at the impact of Ukrainian air defense systems, but also at the incessant lies of the Zelensky regime, which has brought their country to an almost fatal point.

Ukrainians are also angry because they are forced to fight for this corrupt, paid-for and anti-national government, contrary to the assurances of the leader of the Kiev junta. Men of conscription age are approached in the streets, in public transportation. Intimidation and violence are used against them. It has even come to the point that conscription notices are handed to priests, who are threatened with reprisals against their relatives. And then, without any training, they are thrown to the front line. One of the Ukrainian commanders recently complained that such fighters are not even assigned call

signs, because they die too soon. This senseless grinder is about to engulf not only men but also women.

At a recent press conference, Zelensky raised the stakes. He wants to send 500,000 people to certain death. For this purpose, he prepared a draft law on new conscription rules. It involves bringing the conscription age down to 25 years, reducing the list of persons who are not covered by conscription, a voluntary census of men, a ban on leaving the country and any actions with property, as well as blocking of bank accounts. The list is not exhaustive, for the crackdown continues. It is not for nothing that some commentators associate it with serfdom.

Against this backdrop, even pro-Western Ukrainians had their optimism diminish considerably. The society no longer harbors any illusions. People understand perfectly well that the country has betrayed them, or rather, the authorities of this country have betrayed them, that their husbands, brothers and sons are being sacrificed to serve the geopolitical goals of the West to contain Russia and to keep the corrupt regime on a cushy spot. Recent studies confirm this: 75% of Ukrainians are willing to give up their citizenship to avoid conscription. These trends are clearly demonstrated by the panic activity of those residents of the country who have managed to travel abroad. They are now storming Ukrainian consulates in hopes to have their expiring documents renewed and property ownership transferred to their wives. As soon as the above-mentioned law comes into force, they will be deprived of almost any rights in their country.

This is the reality in which Ukrainians have to live today, but of course we have not heard any assessments of this lawlessness from any of our Western colleagues. In this reality, Ukraine is

surviving solely thanks to colossal financial injections from Washington, London and Brussels. Ukrainian civil servants, including diplomats, receive their salaries from foreign countries. The military equipment and uniforms of the Ukrainian armed forces also come from abroad; the Zelensky regime has long since lost everything of its own. In fact, Ukraine today is nothing but a private military company in the hands of Western countries, whose task is to inflict maximum damage on Russia. This is what the Western sponsors of the Kiev regime are guided by, allocating money for arms, and they do not care about the lives of ordinary Ukrainians.

Colleagues, it is the reality of today that Ukraine does not and will not have the resources to change the tide or even to preserve the situation on the contact line. And it is not so much about the inefficient use by the Maidan regime of the weapons supplied to it. For example, Minister of Defense D. Kuleba directly linked the failure of the counteroffensive to "the pathetic, deplorable state of the defense industry and warehouses in NATO countries". There is only one conclusion from all this, and it is a disappointing one for our enemies - the Kiev regime's military plans have failed completely. So wait the worst news for you and your Ukrainian proxies in the very near future.

It does not matter whether new military and financial aid packages for Zelensky and his gang are going to be approved in Washington or Brussels or not. This will delay the agony of his regime, but will not prevent it. It is clear that the bet on solving the Ukrainian crisis on the battlefield has been a mistake and a failure, and a military victory over Russia is an absolutely unattainable goal. The threats that come from the territory of Ukraine and have been posed by NATO countries will certainly be eliminated, either within the

framework of the special military operation or by using political and diplomatic instruments.

We never renounced the latter, having given the Ukrainian leadership a good chance to preserve territorial integrity (of course without the Crimea that chose to be part of Russia back in 2014) and save lives of hundreds of thousands Ukrainian citizens. That was back in March-April 2022. Lately, a member of Ukraine's negotiating team O.Chalyi admitted that it had been an excellent option for Ukraine. But the masters in London and Washington did not let Kiev use this chance, which has become a confirmed fact by now.

After that, the head of the junta in Kiev for some reason signed a decree forbidding negotiations with the Russian leadership. This decree is still in effect. But those who reproach us for allegedly not willing to negotiate try not to mention that.

Time is running out for the Kiev regime. Its future is really at a serious threat. However peaceful Ukrainians, the Ukrainian language and culture are not exposed to any threats no matter how hard the West tries to prove the opposite. Our special military operation is not aimed against them, but against the criminal Kiev regime, which did not wish to end the war on its own population in Donbas. Zelensky and his clique made their criminal choice for all Ukrainian people. It is our task to not let them annihilate their people completely. We hope that at some point his Western sponsors will realize that too. The sooner it happens – the better for Ukraine.

Thank you.

[Video of the statement](#)

