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**STATEMENT  
by H.E. Mr. Sergey V. LAVROV,  
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation,  
at the 71<sup>st</sup> session of the UN General Assembly**

**September 23, 2016**

Distinguished Mr. Chairman,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

A lot of correct assessments of the state of affairs at this turning point of the world development were voiced from the same podium last year at the anniversary session of the UN General Assembly. Their key-note was the acknowledgement of the fact that humanity in its transition from bipolar and unipolar world order to objectively developing polycentric and democratic system of international relations faces challenges and threats that are common for everyone and that we can overcome only by joint efforts. It was rightly stressed that there is a need to change the philosophy of inter-State communication by excluding the attempts to interfere in the internal affairs of States or to impose development models to countries and nations.

Unfortunately, the ideas of mentoring, supremacy, exclusiveness, realizing their own interests by any means have been deeply enrooted in the minds of political elites of a number of Western countries, to the detriment of the efforts to promote just and equitable cooperation.

The outcome of arrogant attitude and feeling of their infallibility in pushing forward unilateral hazardous solutions to the most complex conflicts and crises can be observed by the example of bleeding Middle East and North Africa. As a result, the basis of world stability is being destroyed.

It is high time to learn lessons and prevent a slide down to a catastrophe in Syria. Mainly thanks to Russia's military assistance to the Syrian legitimate government rendered at its request it became possible to prevent the collapse of the statehood and disintegration of that country under the onslaught of terrorists. Our engagement gave an impetus to the establishment of the International Syria Support Group (ISSG) with a view to starting a meaningful political process so that the Syrians could determine the future of their country themselves through an inclusive dialogue of all ethnic and religious groups. This non-alternative course was recorded in the UN Security Council resolutions and was embodied in recent agreements between Russia and the United States as Co-Chairs of the ISSG. We thank all parties for their support.

Now, it is essential to prevent disruption of these agreements and to carry out an unbiased and impartial investigation of the incidents in Deir ez-Zor and Aleppo that undermine them, even more so that there are quite a few people wishing to sabotage the agreed plans of Syrian settlement. It is of cardinal importance to fulfil the demand by the UN SC to dissociate the so called moderate opposition from terrorists, and a particular responsibility in this regard lies with the US and members of the US-led coalition. The Syrian crisis would not be resolved and the appalling humanitarian situation would not be rectified without suppressing the ISIS, Jabhat al-Nusra and their associate extremist groups. This is a key condition for strengthening the cessation of hostilities regime and overall national truce. It is unacceptable either to delay the inter-Syrian talks without any

preconditions in full accordance with UN SC resolution 2254.

Ukraine, a country close to us, has also fallen victim of those who enjoy zero-point games; its development has been undermined by the anti-Constitutional coup and now is falling apart as a result of the new authorities' refusal to implement the Minsk Agreement of February 12, 2015. It has already become obvious to all, including Kiev's patrons that the expectations to use the Ukrainian crisis for achieving corrupt geopolitical goals have no prospects. We hope that the life itself will compel them to realize all these measures signed by the Ukrainian leaders in Minsk.

By and large, only honest implementation of these agreements would bring us closer to the establishment of space of equal and indivisible security and mutually beneficial cooperation in the Euro-Atlantic area, as it was declared in the OSCE almost twenty years ago. Neither NATO nor the EU will be able to substitute a truly collective unification of efforts in the common interests without winners or losers.

And it is far more unacceptable to make hostage to political ambitions such sphere as sport, which has always contributed to bringing peoples together and strengthening friendship and confidence. The desire to usurp the right to predetermine the outcomes of sport contests does not honour those who boast their allegiance to fair competition but in fact trample the UNGA-approved principles of independence and autonomy of sport contests, and inadmissibility of any discrimination in sport.

In the modern world, it is impossible to be guided by the philosophy of antiheroes of George Orwell's anti-utopia *Animal Farm* where all animals are equal but some are "more equal". In the enlightened twenty-first century, it is simply indecent to mentor everyone around, reserving for oneself the right to use doping or launch unilateral adventures bypassing the UN, or conduct geopolitical experiments that cost millions of human lives, or engage in extraterritorial blackmail of all, including closest allies, when the financial profit "for ours" is at stake; or even to claim the right to set criteria of greatness of that or another country. It is unworthy of principles of freedom and equality on which great nations grew up and which are used by their elites to threaten the entire

world.

This year, we mark the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Nuremberg Tribunal decisions. This anniversary cautions us against forgetting the WWII lessons, reminds us of catastrophic consequences of the attempts to determine the fate of the world by suppressing legitimate interests of other States and peoples. The freedom of expression or peaceful assembly should not be used as a cover for condoning radical movements that profess the Nazi ideology and support the glorification of the Nazi and their accomplices. The vitality of these vicious instincts dictates the need for consistent efforts that can put a solid barrier in the way of neo-Nazism and revanchism, strengthen inter-ethnic and inter-cultural accord, and consolidate the young generation around the ideas of justice and equality. We invite everyone to take part in the XIX World Festival of Youth and Students in Sochi in October 2017.

Hegemonism has no place in the future if we want it to be a just future that gives peoples the opportunity to choose ways of their development. It implies the need to learn respect own's partner and respect cultural and civilizational diversity of the modern world. This means the return to origins – i.e. the norms and principles enshrined in the UN Charter and other instruments of this world organization. Our commitment to that approach was reaffirmed in the Russia-China Declaration on Increasing the Role of International Law signed on June 25, 2016. The observance of the principles of sovereign equality of States and non-interference in the internal affairs should become a measure of decency and legitimacy of any member of the world community, especially if it claims to have privileged positions in the international affairs.

It is naïve to expect success in addressing such global issues as countering international terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and other transboundary threats without abandoning the philosophy of exclusiveness and permissiveness.

There should be no place for double standards in fighting terrorism. Truly universal joint efforts are required to create a wide counter-terrorist front as President V.

Putin proposed in this hall last year. Russia-US agreement reached in Geneva on September 9, which I mentioned before, was to become a first real step toward this goal. The tragedies in Iraq, Libya, Yemen and Syria proved the need to stop timeserving attempts to use extremists for advancing geopolitical intentions. It is necessary before it is too late to dwell on the task to prevent the proliferation of terrorist and extremist ideology, which literally holds the youth hostage in various regions of the world. We are drafting a UN SC resolution aimed at mobilizing efforts to eliminate this evil and looking forward to your support of our initiative.

Beside a terrorist threat we are seriously concerned about trends in the sphere of non-proliferation and arms control. There are attempts to replace the key objectives of maintaining strategic stability in all its components with populist slogans of "nuclear zero". The non-participation of a number of countries possessing nuclear arsenals in the existing treaties is not taken into account either.

The fundamental Non-Proliferation Treaty is put to a serious test, its Parties find it more difficult to speak a common language, especially in a situation when certain nuclear powers torpedo any compromises regarding the start of the negotiations on the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction and means of their delivery in the Middle East.

Russia has consistently supported the liberation of humanity from the threat of nuclear weapons and other types of WMD. However, the advancement toward nuclear disarmament must be made with full consideration of the whole set of factors that affect strategic stability, including the creation of unilateral missile defense systems, placement of strategic non-nuclear strike weapons, threat of placement of weapons in outer space, inability to ensure the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, and growing imbalance in conventional arms in Europe.

We note a growing support of our initiative to draft an international convention for the suppression of the acts of chemical and biological terrorism. The start of serious negotiations on this issue and on Russia-China draft treaty on the prevention of

placement of weapons in outer space would help move the key body of the UN multilateral disarmament mechanism – the Conference on Disarmament – out of an impasse. We call for a substantial examination of our proposals on the improvement of the Convention on the Prohibition of Biological and Toxin Weapons.

NATO member countries brought the conventional arms control in Europe to a deep deadlock. Our attempts to save it faced a tough ideology-driven counteraction. All ideas to come back to this issue would be meaningful only if the North-Atlantic Alliance recognized the absolute futility of ultimatums aimed at achieving unilateral advantages. We continue to be open for an equitable and mutually respectful dialogue with NATO, including within the CSTO.

It is necessary to work toward strengthening stability and equal and indivisible security in other parts of the world, especially in the Asia-Pacific region. The recent actions by the DPRK that violate UN SC resolutions must be stopped. We call on Pyongyang to abandon its nuclear-missile programmes and return to the NPT regime. However, it is inadmissible to use this situation as a pretext for massive militarization of North-East Asia and deployment of another position area for US global missile defense there. All sides must refrain from further escalation of tension and embark on the way toward politico-diplomatic settlement of the nuclear problem of the Korean Peninsula through the resumption of six-Party talks.

We will continue the dialogue within the East-Asia summits on the establishment of a regional security and cooperation architecture in the APR on the non-bloc basis. A number of participating countries, including Russia, India, China and Indonesia, have submitted their considerations in this regard. We also invite the countries of the region to agree on the ways to implement the initiative by President V. Putin to establish an extended Eurasia Partnership with the participation of the Eurasian Economic Union countries and other members of CIS, as well as the SCO and ASEAN, and other interested States. I would like to underline that this initiative is of open character and implies the work on the basis of the WTO norms and principles, unlike the projects of

close trade-investment blocs threatening to undermine the unity of global trade system.

We will continue to promote the unification agenda in various international formats, first of all the UN, BRICS, the SCO, and G20. The recent summit in Hangzhou reaffirmed the status of G20 as a leading global economic and financial forum. We thank the Chinese Chairmanship for its efforts to effectively use this representative platform for the exchange of views on the key issues of global economy and policy for subsequent promotion of these agreements in the UN universal format.

The signing of the Paris Agreement on the prevention of climate change has become an important event in the UN activities. The communication of intended nationally determined contributions towards achieving the objective of the Agreement as set out in it – to hold the increase in global average temperature to below 2 °C. Clear rules and procedures to implement the provisions of the Paris Agreement with consideration for interests of all countries participating in the process should be developed in order to achieve success. The launch of market and non-market mechanisms to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases as stipulated in Article VI of the Agreement is of priority in this context. In the final analysis, this would be of crucial importance for preventing the violations of competitive environment and transfer of "dirty production" from some countries to other ones which hampers the achievement of sustainable development goals.

The UN was established with a view "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war" and develop equitable international cooperation. Today, this objective covers all areas of international life and human communication: from politico-military aspects of security to climate protection, from conflict settlement and peacekeeping to ensuring human rights and freedoms, from sustainable development to fair regulation in information technology, from fight against terrorism and drug traffic to combating corruption, from eradication of infectious diseases to upholding social responsibility of business and fostering scientific and technological progress, and it goes without saying that the UN is called to promote the dialogue of civilizations, support pluralism and

equality of cultures and traditions, and serve as a catalyst of progress in science and arts. In essence, it is a matter of preserving humanity in all its richness and diversity. This is the goal that should constitute the basis of our collective efforts and become an imperative for global development and an incentive for improving global governance and real democratization of international relations.