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RUSSIAN FEDERATION

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR A.V. SHULGIN
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO THE OPCW
AT THE FIFTY-NINTH MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairperson,

I would like to start my speech with the words that belong to the great thinker Martin Luther, “A lie is like a snowball: the further you roll it, the bigger it becomes”.

This wise aphorism is fully applicable to politics. He who has chosen the path of deception will have to lie again and again, making up explanations for discrepancies, spreading disinformation and doing forgery, desperately using all means to cover the tracks of the lies and to hide the truth.

The United Kingdom has entered this slippery path. We can clearly see all of this on the example of the “Skripal case” fabricated by the British authorities, this poorly disguised anti-Russian provocation accompanied by an unprecedented propaganda campaign, taken up by a group of countries, and the finalized unprecedented expulsion of diplomats under a far-fetched pretext. Please, do not try to pass this group for the international community – it is far from that.

It has already been a month since the Prime Minister of Great Britain Theresa May put forward some extremely serious accusations against Russia of the alleged use of chemical weapons. We have been waiting for an explanation for a long time, counting on our British colleagues to eventually back up these loud statements with some at least halfway intelligible facts. We have repeatedly proposed to them to work together on the investigation of the events in Salisbury, have been requesting information. The response consisted in haughty, arrogant statements saying Russia should confess to the crime.

The British side continues to scatter absolutely unfounded accusations, disseminating more and more new, often senseless, versions of the events. The British politicians and officials simply cannot stop anymore and continue pouring down new torrents of lies. London sabotages every attempt to conduct a truly objective investigation into the incident in Salisbury with the participation of Russian experts. They have classified everything,

¹ English version – unofficial translation.



supposedly conducting their own national investigation. Although the “responsible” have already been designated.

Why they are doing this is obvious. Great Britain strives to avoid at all costs the establishment of the truth about the events, hide all evidence, which could unmask them. They are simply playing for time. Because the further it gets – the more difficult it will be to figure out what really did (or did not) happen in Salisbury.

The lie always fears the truth, for the truth is the most terrifying weapon against lies. Let us, therefore, turn to the naked facts which demonstrate how insolently and clumsily the British government is disseminating the insinuations regarding the “Skripal case”.

LIE №1

Russia does not respond to any legitimate questions made by the United Kingdom on March 12, 2018 through the Ambassador of the Russian Federation to London A.V. Yakovenko (some of the allies of the United Kingdom keep repeating this like a mantra).

I would like to remind you that the British side has suggested that we confess to one of the two versions it has made up: either the poisoning of Sergey and Yulia Skripal was a purposeful action by Russia, or Russia has lost control over the arsenal of chemical weapons it allegedly has. Despite the brazen nature of this ultimatum, we definitely did not ignore it, but immediately gave an unequivocal answer: Russia has nothing to do with the chemical incident in Salisbury. Great Britain has not contacted us with any other questions.

LIE №2

Great Britain acts in strict compliance with the Chemical Weapons Convention.

The facts demonstrate exactly the opposite. Thus, the Article IX of the Convention stipulates that States Parties shall conduct bilateral consultations on any ambiguous issues. We see that in reality the United Kingdom has avoided complying with this provision and still refuses to interact with us. As far as the British ultimatum communicated through the Ambassador of the Russian Federation I have mentioned is concerned, it cannot in any way be considered a “proposal of cooperation” in the sense of the CWC or a “request for legal assistance”.

On our part, on April 13, we sent through the Technical Secretariat a note to the British side under the Paragraph 2 Article IX with a list of legitimate questions that we have regarding the “Skripal case”. We have been acting strictly in accordance with the Convention and expected that our partners from London would do the same. There still has been no response. It is as if the United Kingdom did not notice the Convention at all or did not want to act in accordance with its norms.

We also witnessed how London came up with a new form of work – “the independent verification by the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW of the British side’s findings.” I would like to underscore: there is nothing like this in the Convention. This is an invention by the United Kingdom. Instead of precisely following the provisions of the Convention, the United Kingdom tries to pull the wool over everyone’s eyes.

LIE №3

Russia refuses to cooperate in establishing the truth.

In the reality, it is exactly the opposite. Russia is extremely interested – probably, even more than any other country – in an honest, open and impartial investigation of the incident in Salisbury. We have repeatedly proposed, asked, demanded from the British side to cooperate in the investigation. We have put forward for the consideration of the 57th extraordinary session of the Executive Council a draft decision that contained the call for Russia and Great Britain to establish such interaction with the involvement of the Technical Secretariat. We expressed then and confirm now our readiness to cooperate with the OPCW and within the OPCW.

Unfortunately, all of our efforts stumble into a blind wall of complete unwillingness of London to interact.

LIE №4

The United Kingdom claims that Russia, allegedly, infinitely multiplies its versions of the chemical incident in Salisbury trying to divert from itself the wave of criticism for the alleged use of chemical weapons on the British soil.

In the reality, this is what the British side has been doing, disseminating through its so-called “independent” media the infinite versions: the poison first was in the suitcase, then on the door handle, then in the buckwheat, then at the restaurant, then in the flower bouquet, then in the ventilation system of the car, then in perfume, etc.

LIE №5

The Russian leadership has allegedly stated that the extermination of traitors abroad is the state policy of the Russian Federation.

This is slander and complete nonsense. Let them demonstrate where they saw this. Obviously, the United Kingdom will not be able to present a single example of a statement of this kind because nothing similar has ever been said by the Russian leadership.

LIE №6

The conclusions made by the experts of the Technical Secretariat based on the results of the analysis of samples collected from the Skripal father and daughter confirmed that they had been poisoned with a substance from the “Novichok” family.

Our military experts are ready to present their evaluation of what was said in the report by the Technical Secretariat based on the results of the work of the group of specialists in the United Kingdom.

For now, I will only say one thing: the claim that the Technical Secretariat confirmed that this chemical points to its Russian origin is an outright lie. The report itself does not say a single word about the name “Novichok”; the CWC simply does not contain such a concept. And in the report by the Technical Secretariat there is also no confirmation of the “Russian footprint” in the chemical substance found in Salisbury.

Nevertheless, the British authorities immediately disseminated in the world media the fake news that the OPCW supposedly confirmed that the Skripals were poisoned with

“Novichok”, and that the latter, they say, was developed in the USSR and Russia only, hence Moscow is to blame. This is how the findings of the report by the Technical Secretariat are being falsified.

LIE №7

The so-called “Novichok” is a Soviet invention and it, supposedly, could have been produced only in Russia.

It is necessary to remind that “Novichok” is the name invented in the West for a group of chemical agents which were developed in many countries, including in the United Kingdom. In one of his recent interviews, the Secretary of State Boris Johnson confirmed that the United Kingdom has samples of this substance at the laboratory in Porton Down. Actually, we have a lot of questions to ask this laboratory. It would be interesting to know how they determined that the Skripals had been poisoned with a “Novichok”-type nerve agent. Because any reasonable person would understand that you can establish this if you have the original component to which you can compare the chemical which has been found. It follows that this laboratory has a stock of “Novichok”, and, possibly, also the antidotes which were used in the Skripals’ treatment.

In Russia, there has never been any research and development or experimental work conducted as part of a programme under the name of “Novichok”. I reiterate, there has never been a programme with such a name. In the Soviet times, starting with the 1970s, not only the Soviet, but also the British and American scientists were working on creating new types of nerve agents. This is how the famous VX nerve gas was created. And in the 1990s, after the breakup of the USSR, the Western special services exported from Russia a group of chemists together with the documentation. The specialists in the West began to closely study the documents and, based on them, started working in this direction, achieved certain results, which were made public.

We know very well that the “Novichok”-type nerve agents were in production in a number of countries. And, unlike our Western partners, who are constantly rolling their eyes and saying that they know something but that it, as they say, is intelligence data and they cannot reveal it, we operate in a different fashion. We work with open sources. Thus, on December 1, 2015, the United States Patent and Trademark Office contacted the Russian agency responsible for issues concerning patents with a request to check the patentability of an invention made by an American scientist T. Rubin. Here is this document (demonstration).

This document talks about the invention of a special bullet, the distinctive feature of which is that it has a separate cavity for equipping it with different kinds of toxic agents. When using the mentioned invention, the lethal effect is achieved due to the effect of this toxic agent on the human body. In other words, this ammunition falls under the jurisdiction of the CWC. The principle of operation of the bullet consists in equipping it with binary components which interact with each other upon impact. And this is what we read on the page 11 of this official American document, “At least one of the active substances may be selected from nerve agents including... tabun (GA), sarin (GB), soman (GD), cyclosarin (GF), and VG, VM, VR, VX, and [attention!] Novichok agents.”

In other words, this document confirms that in the United States the “Novichok”-type nerve agents were not just produced but also patented as a chemical weapon. And not some long time ago, but just a couple of years ago – the patent is dated December 1, 2015.

Moreover, searching by the key word “Novichok” on the digital source google.patents.com you can find over 140 patents issued by the United States, related to the use and protection from exposure to the “Novichok” toxic agent.

These are the real facts, not some idle talk, and the response to those who insolently claim that the “Novichok”-type nerve agents existed and were produced in the USSR and Russia.

LIE №8

One of the victims, a Russian citizen Yulia Skripal is, allegedly, avoiding contacts with her relatives and refusing the Russian consular assistance.

Presently, the British authorities are zealously hiding Yulia Skripal from the media and the public. Her whereabouts are unknown. The Russian side, as well as her relatives (her cousin Victoria was refused an entry visa by the British authorities) are being denied access to her. She does not have the opportunity to go back to Russia and undergo medical examination and treatment.

The abovementioned circumstances indicate that, in fact, the Russian citizen Yulia Skripal is being held hostage by the British authorities, held by force on the territory of the United Kingdom, subjected to psychological manipulation.

I have given just a few examples of how the British authorities spread disinformation and blatantly lie. This list of disclosures could, probably, go on, but we should probably stop here. It is typical that the United Kingdom is not even thinking about refuting any of their theses, despite the fact that they are completely unfounded.

I have no doubts that in the future, we can await new waves of disinformation, pseudo-leaks to the media, insolent attacks on us by the British officials. But no real evidence will ever be produced.

The United Kingdom demonstrates clear unwillingness to adequately cooperate regarding the investigation of this obscure story. This convinces us that the United Kingdom does not want any truth. They cannot allow it to come to light.

The report presented by the Technical Secretariat concerning the British specialists' findings poses a number of questions and calls for additional detailed examination, including by the British side. Any specialist would understand that the final conclusions can be made only having before your eyes the materials of the chemical and spectral analysis of the mentioned samples. And the Technical Secretariat has passed these materials only to London.

We underscore, Russia will not take at face value any conclusions regarding the “Skripal case” until one simple condition is met: the Russian experts will be provided with access to the victims, as well as to the mentioned materials of the OPCW expert analysis and the entire volume of the real information regarding this incident London has at its disposal.

We have solid grounds to believe that all of this is a gross provocation against Russia by the special services of the United Kingdom. And if the British side continues to refuse to cooperate with us, it will only reaffirm our conviction that this is exactly the case.

One cannot help but recall the following saying: for some people lying is not a means of justification, but a means of defence. On April 16, we heard yet another strange statement: the G7 calls upon Russia to respond to the legitimate questions of the United Kingdom regarding the “Skripal case”. You can consider this statement our response.

At the same time, we would like to hear from the British side the answers to the numerous and specific questions of the Russian Federation regarding the incident in Salisbury. Moreover, we would be grateful if the representatives of the G7 could explain to us why their countries launched a diplomatic war against Russia based on some fakes.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson.

Please, circulate this statement as an official document of this special OPCW Executive Council session.

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