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**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1176th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

15 February 2018

On racism and police violence in the United States of America

Mr. Chairperson,

Last week, on 5 February, a sheriff's deputy shot 16-year-old Anthony Weber in Los Angeles. Reportedly, the dead boy fitted the description of the subject of an anonymous phone call, supposedly an African-American teenager wearing jeans and a black T-shirt, who was threatening the caller with a gun. Arriving at the scene, the police, without checking properly, set out in pursuit of a young man. The pursuit ended with the death of the suspect, who, according to various reports, was shot as many as ten times. No weapon was found on Mr. Weber.

We have raised the subject more than once at meetings of the Permanent Council of police brutality and the impunity of members of law enforcement bodies in the United States of America for the killing of citizens of African-American or Latin American origin.

The situation has not changed in any way. The death of Mr. Weber was unfortunately by no means an isolated incident. We need only recall the massive outcry in Baltimore, Ferguson and Chicago following the shooting of African Americans by the police.

According to statistics posted on the human rights website KilledByPolice.net, a total of 1,169 persons were killed by the police in the United States in 2016 and 1,189 in 2017. This year, the figure already stands at more than 100. A number of publications, including the *Washington Post*, have reported more than once that criminal proceedings against police officers accused of killing are instigated in only 1 to 2 per cent of cases.

The systemic nature of this problem is also underlined by the recent high-profile case of Stephen Mader in the state of West Virginia, who was dismissed from the police force merely for refusing to shoot at a person. I recall that in 2016 Mr. Mader, a police officer, arrived at the scene and having duly assessed the situation, considered that the African American R. J. Williams, who was standing before him with a gun in his hands, did not present a threat but, on the contrary, was depressed and possibly in need of assistance. When Mr. Mader's colleagues arrived to assist him, however, they thought differently and shot

Mr. Williams, whose gun proved subsequently to be unloaded. Mr. Mader was dismissed as a result for not shooting. It was only the day before yesterday, 13 February 2018, that he was rehabilitated by court decision after a drawn-out legal action.

Human rights defenders say that police brutality and the impunity of police officers are greatly exacerbated by the biased attitude to members of racial and ethnic minorities. For example, according to the website MappingPoliceViolence.org, while Black Americans make up around 13 per cent of the total population of the United States, they account for around a quarter of the victims of police shootings. Moreover, around 30 per cent of the victims are unarmed. African Americans are three times more likely to be killed by the police and are frequently victims of racial profiling. On the basis of the statistics, police reports, the testimony of ordinary citizens and media information, MappingPoliceViolence experts conclude that the majority of deaths could have been avoided.

The participating States agreed in Copenhagen in 1990 that “all persons are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to the equal protection of the law. In this respect, the law will prohibit any discrimination and guarantee to all persons equal and effective protection against discrimination on any ground.” In Maastricht in 2003, the OSCE countries confirmed that “practices related to discrimination and intolerance both threaten the security of individuals and may give rise to wider-scale conflict and violence.”

We once again call on the United States to respect international human rights standards and commitments, also with regard to police activities, and urge the OSCE’s specialist bodies to carefully monitor this situation.

Thank you for your attention.