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**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1129th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

26 January 2017

**In connection with the information from the OSCE Secretary General on
the situation regarding the extension of the mandate of the team of OSCE
observers at the Russian checkpoints of Gukovo and Donetsk**

Mr. Chairperson,

In connection with the question raised about the extension of the mandate of the team of OSCE observers at the two Russian checkpoints of Gukovo and Donetsk on the Russian-Ukrainian border, I should like to recall that the team was established at the invitation of Russia in a spirit of goodwill as an additional confidence-building measure following the Berlin Declaration by the Normandy quartet on 2 July 2014.

As for the suggestion by the distinguished Swiss colleague about the absence of a memorandum of understanding between Russia and the OSCE, I should like to point out the following. The team operates on Russian territory on the basis of an Order by the Government of the Russian Federation of 15 October 2014. As long as the OSCE does not have an international legal personality, it is premature to conclude any kind of memoranda. We have repeatedly urged the adoption of a charter by our Organization. We are willing to continue working on this with the new Austrian head of the specialist working group.

Thank you for your attention.