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Delegation of Belgium

**STATEMENT BY
AMBASSADOR DIDIER NAGANT DE DEUXCHAISNES,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE KINGDOM OF BELGIUM TO THE
OSCE, AT THE 1307th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

25 March 2021

On the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the terrorist attacks in Brussels

Madam Chairperson,

On Monday, it was exactly five years ago that our country was deeply scarred by the terrorist attacks of 22 March 2016. Today, the material damage has been repaired and is no longer visible. For the survivors, the relatives of the victims and the emergency services, however, the damage, the scars, the pain and the emptiness remain.

That is why we take this opportunity, also here at the OSCE, to honour and remember the 32 people who lost their lives five years ago, to show our solidarity with the survivors, their families and loved ones, and to express our gratitude to all those who provided assistance.

The terrorist attacks of 22 March 2016 did not only take a heavy human toll. They were also an attack on freedom, democracy, tolerance and hope. However, Belgium is firmly convinced that the cruelty of this violence cannot take hold of us and that hatred can never change who we are, nor the plans we make.

The fight against terrorism therefore remains a top priority for Belgium, and we are convinced of the OSCE's potential to contribute to this fight. Unfortunately, despite the various initiatives in this regard, which I welcome here, we are forced to note that, in recent years, we have been unable to achieve a consensus to strengthen our common efforts in this area. We regret this fact and believe that it would be to the advantage of all participating States to remedy this situation.

In order to combat terrorism, the Belgian security services and judicial system are working tirelessly to carry out their important tasks. However, as our Prime Minister, Alexander De Croo, reminded us on Monday, the only lasting solution to terrorism is to strengthen the ties that bind us together and enable us to jointly foster resilience.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.