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**STATEMENT BY MR. ANVAR AZIMOV,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

22 January 2009

**Regarding the murder of Mr. Stanislav Markelov and
Ms. Anastasia Baburova**

Madam Chairperson,

In connection with the concerns voiced by the European Union, Canada, Norway, the United States of America and a number of other countries regarding the murder in Moscow on 19 January of the lawyer, Mr. Stanislav Markelov, and the journalist from “Novaya Gazeta” accompanying him, Ms. Anastasia Baburova, we should like to say the following.

There is no doubt that what happened shocked the Russian public and resulted in widespread indignation. The loss of any human life is always a tragedy but a planned and brutal murder is a particularly grave crime against the individual, for which the guilty must be severely punished. We mourn this loss and express our condolences to the friends and family of the victims.

The competent Russian authorities are taking the necessary measures to investigate all the circumstances surrounding the incident and to find those responsible for this crime and bring them to justice. The investigative committee under the office of the public prosecutor of the city of Moscow has instituted criminal proceedings under article 105 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation. A special task force has been set up and has begun its work. According to information available, the investigation has been placed under the personal supervision of the Prosecutor General, Mr. Yuriy Chaika. We do not at this time have any further details.

We urge our partners to refrain from efforts to find a political subtext in the tragedy and from drawing hasty conclusions and making sweeping generalizations. Let us await the conclusion of the investigation, regarding the outcome of which we shall inform countries with an interest in this matter.

Thank you for your attention.