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**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,  
AT THE 1265th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL  
VIA VIDEO TELECONFERENCE**

30 April 2020

**On the risks of domestic and sexual violence in the context of the coronavirus crisis**

Mr. Chairperson,

Violence, particularly violence against women, remains, in all its forms and manifestations, a pressing challenge in the OSCE area. Unfortunately, the measures adopted to combat the coronavirus have intensified this phenomenon.

When tackling the imperative task of combating violence against women and helping its victims, one should not forget about the need to expand women's rights and opportunities. The present situation has once again confirmed the importance of upholding civil, political, social and economic rights as an integrated set of human rights, notably with a view to eradicating mistreatment in an effective manner. In that respect, the pandemic and its consequences have highlighted the significance of the social and economic rights of the "fair sex". This was one of the aspects discussed during the webinar on the effects of COVID-19 on the situation of women that was recently held by the OSCE Secretariat's Gender Section.

Violence and abuse are a criminal offence under the legislation of all countries. The specific context of investigations into, and prosecution of, crimes of a sexual nature requires an effective law enforcement system to be in place. No less important is the need to foster, across society, a culture of rejection of such actions. It is also necessary to develop measures aimed at preventing the stigmatization of victims and at ensuring their rehabilitation and reintegration into society.

The prevention and combating of all types of violence against women are traditionally high on the list of priorities of the Russian Federation's domestic and foreign policy.

Accordingly, as part of the set of measures taken in Russia to combat the coronavirus, inter-agency work has been intensified on informing the public about the activities of crisis centres providing assistance to female victims of mistreatment, and also on setting up new shelters. The information about relevant helplines is regularly updated. Support is made available to non-profit organizations dealing with domestic violence issues. Outreach efforts on the Internet are being stepped up to prevent such violence and to foster in the public an attitude of consistent rejection of unlawful behaviour in the family sphere. However, this is by no means an exhaustive list of the measures taken by the authorities in these difficult conditions.

Our country invariably and fully complies with all the international obligations it has undertaken in this area. These very objectives are pursued by the OSCE participating States and by relevant OSCE documents, including the 2018 Milan Ministerial Council decision on preventing and combating violence against women.

Thank you for your attention.