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PC.DEL/1668/20
26 November 2020

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1291st MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL VIA VIDEO
TELECONFERENCE**

26 November 2020

**On the anniversary of the General Framework Agreement for
Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina**

Mr. Chairperson,

On 21 November, the text of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, known unofficially as the Dayton Peace Agreement, marked its 25th anniversary. This peace agreement not only put a stop to the bloody armed conflict, but also helped to find lasting solutions that took into account the interests of all parties. It is equally important for peace, security and stability not only in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but also in the entire Western Balkan region.

The Dayton Peace Agreement gives consideration to Bosnia and Herzegovina's unique multi-ethnic and multi-confessional population and defines clear principles for its functioning. The document sets out the details of the internal organization of the State, enshrines the constitutional status of the two entities, delimits the areas of responsibility of the levels of government, guarantees the equality of the three constituent peoples, and introduces effective mechanisms for the exercise of their rights, including a mechanism to protect vital national interests. As a result, conditions were created for the stable political and economic development of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a sovereign State, and the foundation for its modern existence was laid.

We consider the Dayton Peace Agreement to be an important milestone for the OSCE as well. Our Organization was one of the first to respond to the call of the parties to the agreement to facilitate the implementation of its provisions. The decision of the Ministerial Council in Budapest in 1995 on OSCE action for peace, democracy and stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina called the document "historic". We are convinced that this assessment is absolutely justified to this day.

In a quarter of a century, the Dayton Agreement has reaffirmed the viability and functionality of Bosnia and Herzegovina's administrative system under the peace agreement, which is based on the balance of interests of the country's peoples. The current structure of the State system has demonstrated its efficiency and has stood the test of time.

Twenty-five years ago, Russia became a guarantor of the Dayton Peace Agreement. Today, just as then, we are committed to the successful progressive development of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a fully autonomous and independent State, free from outdated foreign guardianship. We advocate strict compliance with all norms and principles of international law, which is the basis of the Dayton Agreement. We believe that any amendments to the agreement can be made only with the internal consent on an equal basis of the three constituent peoples and the two entities. On the other hand, any attempt to forcibly reconstruct the Dayton architecture in favour of centralization and unitarization of the State in the absence of internal consensus is fraught with the most damaging consequences for peace and stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina and beyond.

Thank you for your attention.