



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF LATVIA TO THE UN,  
OSCE AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN VIENNA

**Statement by Representative of the Delegation of the Republic of Latvia  
in response to the statement of the Delegation of the Russian Federation  
under agenda item “Current issues”  
at the Permanent Council Meeting No.724 on 31 July, 2008.**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman,

I would like to comment on the statement made by the distinguished representative of the Russian Federation.

The official position of the Latvian government has always been consistent - all persons are equal before the law and courts. In particular, the Latvian government has a firm position that perpetrators of crimes may not go unpunished only because they have acted on behalf of certain ideologies. A different conclusion would run contrary to the well-established international principle of combating impunity.

As concerns the recently delivered judgment by the European Court of Human Rights in Mr. Vasily Kononov's case, I would like to underline that it is of complicated nature, involving questions of international humanitarian law, international criminal law and international human rights law. The 24 July judgment has been delivered by the European Court's of Human Rights Chamber, meaning that pursuant to the European Convention of Human Rights it may be appealed against. Given that the Chamber judges were extremely divided in their views concerning the Kononov's case, the Government of Latvia is presently considering whether to use the right to an appeal. In other words, the mentioned judgment by the European Court of Human Rights has not yet entered into force and therefore it is too early to make any conclusions as to its significance or possible effects.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman,