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Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. DMITRY BALAKIN,
DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1226th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

2 May 2019

On the presidential election in Ukraine

Mr. Chairperson,

The presidential election in Ukraine was highly significant, as a reflection both of the true state of affairs in the country and with regard to certain aspects of the work of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR).

Let us look at the report on the second round of voting issued by the International Election Observation Mission consisting of the ODIHR, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and the European Parliament. The numerous irregularities during the voting identified by the observers are indicative of serious problems. They included vote-buying, misuse of administrative resources, multiple violations of electoral procedures by the election commissions, media bias, use of “dirty” election technologies, and many others.

At the same time, the conclusions of the ODIHR mission, in contrast to the first round, did not mention any gross violations by the Ukrainian authorities of the letter and the spirit of the 1990 CSCE Copenhagen Document. We recall that Russian observers were not allowed into the country, which was an example of discrimination on the grounds of nationality. The Ukrainian Government effectively deprived millions of Ukrainians of the right to vote by the decision not to open polling stations at their diplomatic missions in Russia. In addition, the inhabitants of Donbas and internally displaced persons in Ukraine were excluded from the political process.

We regard the presence in a public document of an assertion about the “illegal annexation of the Crimean Peninsula by the Russian Federation” to be a gross violation of the ODIHR’s powers. Paragraph 3(b) of Permanent Council Decision No. 485 of 2002 states that “statements [by OSCE institutions] should not be inconsistent with OSCE consensus positions.” We urge the ODIHR to act strictly in accordance with its mandate and the Organization’s procedures and to refrain from using boilerplate anti-Russian texts.

On the whole, the result of the election clearly demonstrated the failure and unpopularity of Mr. Poroshenko’s policies: anti-Russian and, to judge by the 73 per cent of voters supporting

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Volodymyr Zelensky, anti-Ukrainian – the same political line that the distinguished Ukrainian Permanent Representative has insisted on so fervently here in the last few years.

We hope that the newly elected President of Ukraine will take a more responsible attitude to the aspirations of his own people and to his country's international commitments, in particular in the area of human rights. We also trust that in the run-up to the parliamentary elections, the Ukrainian authorities will also stop violating OSCE election commitments.

Thank you for your attention.