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**STATEMENT BY MR. ANDREY KELIN,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1007th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

10 July 2014

**In response to the European Union's concern regarding
human rights activist Andrey Yurov**

Mr. Chairperson,

We have taken note of the concern expressed by the representatives of the European Union and the United States of America. It is true that on 2 July in Voronezh, unidentified individuals attacked Andrey Yurov, a member of the Presidential Council for Civil Society and Human Rights, throwing a green antiseptic liquid at him and hitting his legs. Mr. Yurov had gone for a stroll near the building of the Human Rights House. The human rights activist reports that he feels fairly well, aside from the fact that his eyes hurt from the antiseptic. The police have pressed charges of hate-motivated assault, which carries a maximum sentence of two years' imprisonment. The investigation is being led by the regional subdivision of the counter-extremism department of the Ministry of the Interior. We will inform you of the outcome. Incidentally, Mr. Yurov is the co-chair of the temporary working group of the Council for Civil Society and Human Rights charged with monitoring human rights in Ukraine and of the temporary working group to facilitate the development of civil society in Crimea. He is also active in the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation.

Of course, spraying anybody with antiseptic, whether they be a human rights activist or not, is very bad. However, we should sincerely like to know why precisely this case caught the attention of our esteemed colleagues from the European Union. If it is because Mr. Yurov is an activist, then why, for example, has no attention been paid to a similar attack on his counterpart from Moldova, the human rights activist Oleg Brega, in Chişinău at the end of June? He was actually far more badly injured than Mr. Yurov. It would appear that the reason for the lack of reaction to this incident is that Moldova is now associated with the European Union, and therefore beyond reproach.

If our colleagues condemn inappropriate expressions of one's attitude towards certain individuals or political figures, then why do we not discuss at the Permanent Council the numerous cases of attacks against politicians, deputies, prime ministers and presidents using paint, antiseptic, eggs, tomatoes and even boots?

Alas, this practice goes back many years. Back in 2003, paint was thrown at Anders Fogh Rasmussen during his tenure as Prime Minister of Denmark. At one time, a statuette was thrown at Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi. Eggs were thrown at German President Christian Wulff and the governor of the federal state of Hesse, Volker Bouffier. French President Nicolas Sarkozy was attacked with eggs and paper. Boots were thrown at United States President George W. Bush, former Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili and former United States Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. Incidentally, bottles of water and tomatoes were also thrown at Ms. Clinton, and a book at President Barack Obama. The leader of the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia, Vladimir Zhirinovsky, was even pelted with sauerkraut.

And as for Ukraine, according to journalists, throwing eggs and antiseptic liquid at politicians and celebrities has practically become the national sport. Eggs have been thrown at speaker Vladimir Litvin; Viktor Yanukovych, when he was prime minister; former President Viktor Yushchenko; the leader of the Ukrainian Peoples Party, Yuriy Kostenko; the leader of Homeland, Igor Markov; the leader of the People's Opposition bloc, Nataliya Vitrenko; Arseniy Yatsenyuk, then the leader of Front for Change; and Kharkiv mayoral candidate Gennadiy Kernes. And who hasn't been sprayed with antiseptic – both Oleksandr Turchynov and Arseniy Yatsenyuk have been. Former presidential candidates Oleg Lyashko, Mikhail Dobkin, Oleg Tsarev and Nikolay Rudkovsky have also received the same treatment.

So the case of human rights activist Andrey Yurov is, unfortunately, not unique.

Thank you for your attention.