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**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1172nd MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

18 January 2018

On violations of freedom of the media in the United States of America

Mr. Chairperson,

We are regrettably obliged to note that to all appearances the United States of America does not intend to abandon its policy of inflaming anti-Russian hysteria and creating an atmosphere of confrontation in the media.

We have learned that on 10 January, following the television station Russia Today America, the company RIA Global was ordered to register as a foreign agent in the United States. Its sin is to publish content for the office of the Sputnik news agency and radio in the United States.

Measures of this nature are not harmless formalities, as our US colleagues have endeavoured to persuade us, but an artificially created obstacle to the normal work of dissenting mass media, giving rise to all kinds of restrictions. A clear example of this was the recent denial of accreditation in Congress to journalists from Russia Today America because of the television station's status as a "foreign agent".

We regard this policy by the US Government not only as a sign of manifest discrimination against certain media but also in general as an attack on freedom of speech. As such, it contravenes the norms of international law with regard to freedom of expression and guaranteeing equal access to information for all.

We should like to remind the United States that in the CSCE Helsinki Final Act of 1975, the participating States recorded their intention "to facilitate the freer and wider dissemination of information of all kinds, to encourage co-operation in the field of information and the exchange of information with other countries" and, in the Concluding Document of the Vienna Follow-up Meeting of 1989, to "allow individuals, institutions and organizations, while respecting intellectual property rights, including copyright, to obtain, possess, reproduce and distribute information material of all kinds."

Once again, we call on the US Government to refrain from a discriminatory practice that merely provokes inevitable retaliatory measures and leads to a growth in tension, to stop its anti-democratic pursuit of dissenting media and to desist from hampering the work of Russian and other journalists.

We trust that the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media Mr. Harlem Désir will react to this situation in accordance with his mandate.

Thank you for your attention.