

PC.DEL/975/18

16 July 2018

ENGLISH

Original: RUSSIAN

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1191st MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

5 July 2018

On the persecution of Roma in Ukraine

Mr. Chairperson,

We also condemn the crimes committed against members of the Roma community on 23 June in the Lviv region and on 2 July in the Zakarpattia region. As a result of these barbarous acts two people were killed and four injured, including a child. Our condolences go to their families and friends.

As you know, the perpetrators of the crime near Lviv were members of the ultra-right nationalist group Sober and Evil Youth. We do not propose to discuss here how “sober” or “evil” they were. It is important to point out that the illegal acts committed by them are not the exception to the rule but are becoming increasingly commonplace in the modern-day reality in Ukraine, where the voice of militant nationalism, anti-Semitism, xenophobia and religious intolerance, particularly with regard to Christians and those who live and think differently, has become increasingly strident over the years.

We need only recall the tragic events in the village of Loshchynivka in the Odessa region in August 2016, where the terrible murder of a girl led to the expulsion of the entire Roma community from this village and the destruction of their homes.

Discrimination on racial or ethnic grounds against people of different nationalities or skin colour is not uncommon in this country. Indulgence and often open support for these abominable manifestations by the current Ukrainian authorities is a matter of course. An assembly of around 30 radicals, who loudly proclaimed that they would “come for Roma” took place in Kharkhiv on 2 July in the presence of monitors from the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission. The police intervened only after scuffles broke out between nationalists and participants in an LGBT event taking place nearby.

We are forced to note that the stirring up of inter-ethnic discord in Ukraine is also facilitated by the silence of the leaders of most States “to the west of Vienna”, which all too often pretend that there is nothing untoward going on in Ukraine. This situation remains

unchanged despite the accusatory criticism and condemnation by representatives of specialist international structures, particularly those such as the OSCE and the Council of Europe.

The recent joint appeal to the authorities in Kyiv on 14 June by the international human rights non-governmental organizations Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International and others is a telling example in this regard. It noted with concern the growing number of brutal attacks and threats by ultra-radical groups designed to kindle hatred and discrimination. These attacks target representatives of the Roma community and other minorities, human rights defenders and members of the feminist movement. In 2018 alone, international relations experts have noted dozens of incidents throughout the country committed by members of the radical groups C14, Right Sector, Tradition and Order, Karpatska Sich and others. According to the authors of that appeal, the authorities have not carried out effective investigations of these crimes, even when the perpetrators have spoken openly about them on social media and claimed responsibility for their commission.

In that connection, we should once again like to express our solidarity with the victims of the tragic incident in the Lviv region and to call on participating States and the OSCE's specialist bodies to monitor the situation in Ukraine more closely and to react to any manifestations of intolerance or discrimination in that country. We recall our repeated request to the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to draft a dedicated report on the rampant nationalism in Ukraine.

Thank you for your attention.