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**STATEMENT BY MR. VLADIMIR ZHEGLOV,
DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1245th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

31 October 2019

**In response to the report by the Special Representatives of the
OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Youth and Security**

Mr. Chairperson,

We thank the distinguished Special Representatives for their presentation.

The importance of youth work can scarcely be overestimated. After all, the security of the world in the future depends directly on the younger generations. Promoting conditions for their self-fulfilment and social and economic integration into society, notably through high-quality education and employment, are tasks within our Organization's remit.

Projects in the field of creativity, culture and sport are also effective tools here. They enable young people to participate in socially significant activities, help to improve skills and develop talents, increase self-confidence and teach them to live in harmony and without conflict in complex social systems.

This is especially relevant in the context of protecting young people from terrorist and extremist ideas. It is young people, whose world view and social values are in the process of being formed, who are the most vulnerable to radical ideology.

It is the task of the State and society to more actively promote a positive agenda and to disseminate among young people, notably via the Internet and the media, the principles of mutual respect and intercultural and interreligious dialogue, taking into account local traditions and circumstances.

Regional organizations with the necessary expertise play an important role in combating radicalization. We note the fruitful work here by the OSCE as well as the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation.

Special attention should be paid to the phenomenon of using radicalized youth to achieve domestic political goals. I am referring, in particular, to externally controlled processes aimed at overthrowing the legitimate authorities under the guise of provocative slogans. It is important that the declared support of young leaders does not translate into the orchestration of anti-government movements by external forces in States which they consider undesirable.

Russia attaches great importance to youth work. A wide range of large-scale State projects are being implemented in the field of youth policy, and co-operation between the State and youth organizations is being improved. We are always ready to share our national experience.

Mr. Chairperson,

The involvement of young people in any political activity should be natural and based on professional knowledge and skills. There is a need for genuine equality, without artificial quotas and privileges, notably with regard to age or gender.

We fully support the development of youthful civil society. In October 2017, the 19th World Festival of Youth and Students in Sochi was attended by more than 20,000 people from over 180 States.

We note that the OSCE's activities in this field are becoming more visible. This can also be seen from the adoption of the relevant OSCE Ministerial Council declarations in 2014, 2015 and 2018. We believe that the Organization needs to focus on priorities that are in line with regional realities, such as combating the radicalization of youth, the influence of extremist ideology on young people and the spread of racist and neo-Nazi views.

Thank you for your attention.