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**STATEMENT BY
MR. ANDREY KELIN, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1039th MEETING OF
THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

12 February 2015

**On the situation surrounding the international human rights movement
“World Without Nazism”**

Mr. Chairperson,

We feel compelled to raise the matter of the persecution of a number of anti-fascist non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the OSCE area, primarily in the Baltic States. Pressure, the creation of obstacles to the organization of events, pickets and exhibitions – this is by no means a complete list of what Jewish and anti-fascist NGOs are regularly confronted with. The discrediting of the activity of anti-fascist NGOs engaged in monitoring manifestations of racism, anti-Semitism, xenophobia, aggressive nationalism, neo-Nazism and another forms of intolerance is unacceptable.

We are particularly concerned at the situation surrounding the international human rights movement “World Without Nazism”, which unites dozens of anti-fascist organizations from around the world.

We remember very well the problems this NGO came up against in organizing parallel events at the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting in Warsaw. We remember how individual delegations attempted to block the candidature of the speaker from “World Without Nazism” at the High-Level Conference on Tolerance and Non-Discrimination in Tirana.

We are extremely concerned that last year, in its report for 2013, the Latvian Security Police described the international human rights movement “World Without Nazism” as an NGO that was hostile to Latvian statehood, and directly mentioned its vice-president, Dr. Valery Engel. Latvia was the only country to respond in this manner to criticism directed at it. The other countries mentioned in the NGO’s reports responded constructively to the information.

In this connection, the representatives of “Latvia Without Nazism”, the Latvian Anti-Fascist Committee and the Latvian Anti-Nazi Committee were compelled to write an

open letter to the President and the Prime Minister of Latvia and the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights.

An anomalous situation has also developed around Dr. Engel himself, who is being openly harassed by the Latvian intelligence agencies. The Latvian authorities attempted to isolate Dr. Engel by openly exerting pressure on his family. They have postponed issuing his new residence permit for Latvia, although he has every reason to be entitled to an extension under Latvian law (his wife and young daughter are Latvian citizens).

Dr. Engel himself spoke at the last Human Dimension Implementation Meeting in Warsaw about the unusual attention and the endless inspections he was being subjected to by the Latvian intelligence agencies, border guards and customs services. The human rights activist asked the OSCE Chairmanship and structures to take control of this situation, and also wrote a letter to this effect to the Director of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights. Regrettably, there has been no response to these appeals. Evidently they have little interest in the rights of this human rights activist.

The situation surrounding “World Without Nazism” and Dr. Engel himself, who, incidentally, is also an active member of the Jewish movement in Russia and Europe, cannot fail to arouse indignation, particularly during Latvia’s Presidency of the Council of the European Union, when Latvia should be setting an example in its adherence to the observance of human rights and international commitments.

We urge the Latvian authorities to put an end to the illegal practice with regard to “World Without Nazism” and its leader.

Thank you for your attention.