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PC.DEL/1613/21  
22 October 2021

ENGLISH  
Original: RUSSIAN

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE  
1340th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

21 October 2021

**On the International Day of the Girl Child**

Madam Chairperson,

The protection of children's rights remains a priority for the Russian Federation.

In 2011, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 11 October as the International Day of the Girl Child. As you know, its goal is to draw attention to the challenges facing girls all over the world, to find solutions to these problems and to confirm the importance of empowering and protecting the rights of girls. In addition to pointing out the relevance of combating discrimination and violence against girls, this is also a good occasion to recall issues such as access to education and employment, health care and more.

In formulating child protection policies, States need to take into account the characteristics and differences in the needs of girls and boys. However, the Convention on the Rights of the Child is the main reference point for the international community as a whole in the realization of the rights of both girls and boys. The document is the basis, for example, on which recommendations and resolutions by international organizations, national programmes and strategies for improving the situation of children are developed.

Just over 30 years after its adoption, the Convention has 196 parties – a unique testimony to its authority and universal acceptance in the international community. It is no exaggeration to state that this fact makes the document the main point of reference, a kind of gold standard for the protection of children's rights. We urge the one OSCE participating State that has not yet ratified the Convention to do so without undue delay.

The document clearly sets out the rights of girls and boys to protection and security. In that regard, it is totally unacceptable for children's personal data to be posted on offensive websites and minors themselves to be called "threats to national security". We should like to stress that the priority of any government should be to take care of children, who are the most vulnerable category of the population, rather than trying to exploit them for political purposes.

The coronavirus pandemic has exacerbated problems such as child trafficking and online child pornography. At the same time, the challenges related to sexual abuse, reducing homelessness, child

abandonment, providing recreation and health care for children, including those living in difficult circumstances, and improving social services for children with special needs have not disappeared. These are just some examples of the challenges we all need to address for the well-being and harmonious development of the younger generation.

At the same time, it is important to recall that the foundations for the personal growth and development of the child are laid in the family. That is why special attention must be paid to the support of this most invaluable social institution. In Russia, proactive measures are being taken in this area, including a system of support for families with children.

Thank you for your attention.