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PERMANENT MISSION OF THE
REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA TO
THE INTERNATIONAL
ORGANIZATIONS
VIENNA

**Statement of the Delegation of Albania,
In response to the Address by the Deputy Prime-Minister
and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Macedonia,
H.E. Mr. Nikola Poposki**

**As delivered by the Head of Mission, Ms. Ravesa Lleshi, at the
1137th Meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council, 16 March 2017**

Mr. Chairperson,

The Albanian delegation joins others in welcoming the Deputy Prime-Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Macedonia, H.E. Mr. Nikola Poposki to the OSCE Permanent Council and we thank him for his address. Albania aligned with the statement of the European Union, but we would like to make some additional remarks in a national capacity.

Building inter-ethnic trust and confidence between the communities is of paramount importance for Macedonia. The Ohrid Framework Agreement remains the main political and legal framework for ensuring good inter-ethnic relations. Its full implementation has been and should remain the basis for a fully-functioning multi-ethnic society. We have welcomed the conclusion of the Ohrid Framework Agreement Review process on Social Cohesion at the end of 2015, and have urged the Macedonian authorities and the OSCE Mission to Skopje to implement the recommendations from this review.

With regard to references to a so-called "Tirana Platform", let me be clear: Tirana has never drafted any platform. There is a Joint Statement of the Macedonian Albanian political parties, a political platform developed and concluded in Skopje, as an outcome of the electoral programs and commitments of the parties concerned with their constituencies. Any other labeling is inaccurate and contrary to reality.

The Albanian government is not involved in the internal affairs of other countries, and that includes a friendly and neighboring country such as Macedonia. Albania and the Albanians have been, and will continue to be, lasting friends of Macedonia. We believe in coexistence, harmony and cooperation among our countries and citizens. We join other calls for a swift formation of a new government, in respect of the outcome of the December parliamentary elections and of basic democratic principles, OSCE commitments and the European values that the country has undertaken to uphold.

In conclusion, Mr. Minister, let me reiterate once more Albania's unwavering commitment to Macedonia's stability, development and prosperity and our willingness to further strengthen the good-neighborly relations, in line with the European integration objectives of both countries and the region as a whole.

Thank you.