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**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1161st MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

19 October 2017

On the presidential elections in Kyrgyzstan

Mr. Chairperson,

We should like to congratulate our Kyrgyz friends on the successful organization of the presidential elections on 15 October.

A few words on the subject of monitoring by the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). We have carefully studied its preliminary conclusions and are obliged to note that once again the assessment by the Office reveals a biased and deliberately politicized approach, with only passing mention, if at all, of the efforts by the authorities and the evident success by the country in permitting a democratic expression of will. Moreover, the assessment is dominated by critical comments and specific shortcomings.

In that regard, we have drawn attention to the fact that the tone of the opinions expressed within the ODIHR mission varies considerably. For example, in the opinion of the head of the short-term OSCE observer mission Mr. Azay Guliyev, “minor violations do not influence the legitimacy of the election process as a whole” since “the voters were given the possibility of expressing their political will”. Unfortunately, such divergences in the opinions merely highlight the serious shortcomings in the election observation activities of the ODIHR itself.

The OSCE was not the only body working in the country. The elections were also monitored by observation missions from the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. They all stated that the election was transparent and that the Kyrgyz people made their choice freely from 11 candidates.

The large observation mission from the CIS (20 long-term and 192 short-term observers from ten countries) in the country from 22 September worked in all regions of the Republic and visited 1,227 polling stations. It noted the highly professional preparations by all participants in the electoral process and drew attention to the new voting technology – biometric verification during the voting procedure and automatic facilities for accepting and

processing ballots. Concerns regarding possible difficulties in the electoral process because of the multitude of technical innovations proved to be unfounded. The head of the CIS observation mission and chairman of the CIS Executive Committee, Mr. Sergey Lebedev, described the elections as open, transparent and competitive in accordance with international standards. In the opinion of the CIS observation mission the vote counting was also transparent. The Kyrgyz State authorities ensured that citizens could exercise their constitutional rights.

The President of the Russian Federation, Mr. Vladimir Putin, congratulated the elected President of Kyrgyzstan, Mr. Sooronbay Jeenbekov, on his convincing victory and expressed his conviction that the future development of Russo-Kyrgyz relations would respond to the fundamental interests of our two befriended countries and would help strengthen regional stability and security.

Thank you for your attention.