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**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1189th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

14 June 2018

**In response to the report by the Head of the OSCE Centre in Ashgabat,
Natalya Drozd**

Mr. Chairperson,

We are pleased to once again welcome Natalya Drozd to the Permanent Council. Thank you for your detailed report on the activities of the OSCE Centre in Ashgabat.

The Centre's effective co-ordination with the authorities of Turkmenistan allows for the implementation of assistance programmes in all three dimensions. We note the efforts to expand the thematic content of the Centre's project activities. We are satisfied with the fact that traditional areas of co-operation are not being forgotten, including capacity-building of Turkmenistan's border guard service to protect the land border and the border checkpoints at airports, national capacity-building to combat terrorism, and support for specialized agencies' efforts to counter the drug threat. There is still unrest in the territory of Turkmenistan's southern neighbour – in Afghanistan – which means that the Centre's work in the first dimension remains of particular relevance.

We welcome the Centre's activities in areas such as combating corruption, money laundering and the financing of terrorism. We note the contribution to the preparation of the first draft of the road map for the development of solar energy in Turkmenistan, and the consistent steps to build national capacity to respond to the consequences of natural disasters.

An equally important area is support for the activities of the Ombudsperson for Human Rights, and increasing co-ordination with the Turkmen authorities in the human dimension.

Mr. Chairperson,

We appreciate the OSCE Centre's efforts aimed at rendering targeted assistance to Turkmenistan, we understand it to be a result of the concerted efforts of the field presence and the host country to reinforce the long-term national development guidelines. For Russia, as an old friend of Turkmenistan, this is important.

Our bilateral relations are also evolving, the implementation of a number of agreements reached during the visit of the President of Russia to Turkmenistan in October 2017 is continuing. Our States are united in understanding the importance of expanding regional co-operation and in finding a political solution to the remaining problems, primarily in Afghanistan, so that Central Asia will continue to be a region of good-neighbourliness and co-operation.

To conclude, we should like to wish Natalya Drozd and her team success in their useful work in Turkmenistan.

Thank you for your attention.