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**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,  
AT THE 1174th MEETING OF THE  
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

1 February 2018

**On the violation of freedom of the media in Moldova**

Mr. Chairperson,

We thank our distinguished colleague for raising this matter. It is indeed very relevant and requires an appropriate response.

As you know, on 10 January, Speaker of the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova Andrian Candu approved a law that effectively prohibits the broadcasting in Moldova of Russian news and current affairs programmes, though Moldovan President Igor Dodon twice rejected this draft law. This act of overt discrimination against Russian media is ongoing in nature and marks the latest anti-Russian move by the ruling majority in the Moldovan Parliament.

Russophobic forces in the Moldovan Parliament have once again imposed their will on the population, trampling underfoot their basic right to free access to information. This shows that the country is straying ever further from democratic norms and is slipping towards totalitarian practices of combating alternative points of view.

At the same time, a survey conducted in January this year by the Moldovan Association of Sociologists and Demographers showed that only 16.3 per cent of respondents support the ban's introduction. "The overwhelming majority of respondents oppose this act", Moldovan sociologist Victor Mocanu said at a press conference. The survey was conducted from 2 to 18 January 2018, with 1,783 respondents from 91 localities around the country. The maximum margin of error is 2.4 per cent.

Systematic denials of entry to Moldova for Russian journalists constitute another blatant violation of media freedom. To give a few recent examples, a film crew from TV channel RTVI was denied entry to Chişinău on 22 January, despite the fact that the visit had been approved by the presidential administration. On 16 January, Moldovan border guards refused entry to NTV TV channel anchor Irada Zeinalova, and only after President Igor Dodon intervened was she allowed to go and do an interview with him.

This situation demands an immediate response from the OSCE's specialized institutions, above all the Representative on Freedom of the Media. It would be interesting to hear the European Union's view too on how much the Moldovan authorities' zealous desire to purge the country's media space conforms to common European values.

Thank you for your attention.