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**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1236th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

18 July 2019

In response to the report by the Head of the OSCE Programme Office in Dushanbe

Madam Chairperson,

We join in welcoming the Head of the OSCE Programme Office in Dushanbe, Mr. Valeriu Chiveri, and thank him for his detailed report, which is his first in his new role as head of the field presence.

The OSCE Programme Office in Dushanbe continues to be our Organization's greatest asset in Central Asia. Accordingly, the expectations concerning the impact of the Office's work are somewhat higher than the expectations of the activities of other field presences. In this regard, we note the fairly broad thematic coverage of the Office's projects in the first dimension. Of the topics covered, we highlight border security, demining, handling of explosives, support for the reform of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and countering drug-related crime, terrorism and radicalization.

We have taken note of the Office's assistance in facilitating contact between Tajik border officials and their colleagues from Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Afghanistan. We believe such assistance is a good example of targeted support in a highly sought-after area, which the host country is not always able to fully provide owing to the lack of resources. We note with appreciation the trend towards the training within the framework of the Office's projects of a greater number of instructors, which allows Tajik specialists to conduct training independently at a later stage (the train-the-trainer approach).

In general, the increase in the level of attention paid to the Office's work in the politico-military dimension – with an emphasis on border security – is understandable. This has been prompted by instability in neighbouring Afghanistan. We urge the Office not to slacken its efforts in this area, thereby complementing the bilateral assistance provided to Tajikistan, in particular by the Russian Federation, and the assistance provided by other international organizations, including the Collective Security Treaty Organization.

We take a positive view of the activities of the field presence to increase the diversity of projects within the framework of the second dimension. We believe that disaster risk reduction is a promising topic and can bring practical benefits to the host country, along with the projects already implemented by the Office to attract foreign investment, combat corruption, and promote water use issues.

We support the Office's efforts to reinforce the Tajik authorities' policy of curbing and finally eradicating cases of torture by and inappropriate behaviour of members of the country's security agencies, as well as promoting national dialogue on creating a more comfortable environment for people with disabilities.

We are convinced that close co-operation with the authorities of Tajikistan to determine the modalities of practical interaction with the OSCE Programme Office, primarily within the framework of the Partnership Platform, remains one of the key elements for ensuring the effectiveness of the Office's work.

Madam Chairperson,

As a strategic partner of Tajikistan, with which we are united not only by a common history, but also by the existing multifaceted and active co-operation between the two countries, Russia is extremely interested in its systematic and stable development. We hope that the contribution of the OSCE Programme Office to the achievement of this goal will be increasingly practical. We wish Mr. Chiveri and his team fruitful work and every success for the benefit of the host State.

Thank you for your attention.