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**STATEMENT BY
MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1351st MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

20 January 2022

**In response to the address by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign
Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Mukhtar Tileuberdi**

Mr. Chairperson,
Mr. Tileuberdi,

We are pleased to welcome you to this meeting of the Permanent Council. We thank you for your assessments and informative presentation on the aftermath of the awful events that took place in the Republic of Kazakhstan. I believe all the “i’s” have now been dotted, which leaves no room for any speculation or distortion of the facts.

Kazakhstan has experienced a truly major crisis and loss of life. Please accept our sincere condolences on the deaths of law enforcement officers, military personnel and civilians of the Republic. Our compatriots and citizens were also among the victims of the civil unrest.

We regard the tragic events in our neighbour and ally Kazakhstan as an orchestrated attempt to undermine the stability and security of the State in a violent manner using trained and organized armed formations. They made active use of techniques typical of Maidan-style tactics – the use of force and information support for the protests. Well-organized and well-managed groups of terrorist fighters with experience of armed operations and terrorist acts in the world’s “hotspots” (Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan) were involved. This is a far cry from spontaneous protests over fuel prices.

The President of Kazakhstan, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, rightly and promptly requested assistance from members of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) as his country, a member of the CSTO, faced an unprecedented challenge to its security, integrity and sovereignty. How the situation then unfolded fully demonstrated the efficiency, relevance and effectiveness of the CSTO’s peacekeeping capabilities.

At the same time, we could not help but draw attention to the negative portrayal in political circles in the West and in a number of Western media and the expert community of the deployment of the CSTO Collective Peacemaking Forces. For example, Josep Borrell, head of the European External Action Service, argued that the CSTO’s military assistance to Kazakhstan “brings back memories of situations to be

avoided". Major Western media outlets (Bloomberg, Reuters, *The Wall Street Journal* and *The Washington Post*) began to peddle the idea of "Russian intervention" in Kazakhstan. The BBC and other English-language media outlets criticized the actions of the Kazakh authorities and promoted the narrative that "repressive measures" against the so-called peaceful protesters were unacceptable.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken publicly demanded an explanation as to why Kazakhstan had invited peacekeepers from the CSTO and referred to lessons from history: "Once Russians are in your house, sometimes it's very difficult to get them to leave." Meanwhile, White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki practically called into question the nature of the Kazakh President's request, questioning the legitimacy of the CSTO's invitation.

Moreover, the OSCE's response, to put it bluntly, raises many questions.

I hope that those present today have received answers to all their questions. Out of respect for the Minister, we will refrain from asking counter-questions, for example, concerning the length of time the populations of quite a number of countries around the world have to wait for the departure of US forces, who had often not been invited in.

Let us emphasize once again: Kazakhstan is a sovereign State that makes its own decisions aimed at ensuring its own security. For an active member of the CSTO, which it is, there is nothing more logical and justifiable than to make use of the operational mechanisms of that organization. This should be clear to all the countries that view the situation in the Central Asian region through the prism of their own narrowly defined interests.

As far as respect for human rights is concerned, it is worth recalling the spontaneous protests in Europe involving thousands of people, primarily against quarantine regulations and restrictions, which were brutally suppressed in European capitals and provincial towns, with law enforcement authorities not shy in their methods and means. Last year was rich in such events. There were no accusations of excessive use of force levelled at the police, no one mentioned human rights and no one called to impose sanctions on anyone.

For that reason, to those who love to speculate about human rights when it comes to the tragedy of the Kazakh people, I should like to respond with the words of a folk proverb, mentioned in the classic work by Russian writer Nikolai Gogol *The Government Inspector*: "What's the point of blaming the mirror if you don't like what you see?"

In conclusion, I should like to reiterate that Russia intends to continue to give the highest priority to strengthening its strategic partnership and alliance with Kazakhstan and the other CSTO Member States. We are confident that the leadership and people of Kazakhstan will be able to quickly overcome the existing difficulties. Russia, for its part, always stands ready to come to its aid and to counter emerging threats of destabilization with joint efforts.

We wish all the people of Kazakhstan and you personally, esteemed Minister, peace, health and prosperity.

Thank you for your attention.