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**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1115th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

13 October 2016

**In response to the statement of the United States of America regarding
freedom of speech in Russia**

Mr. Chairperson,

We strongly reject efforts by the United States of America and the European Union to characterize legal decisions by Russian authorities as some kind of attempt to “silence independent voices”. Endeavours to make capital, as it were, out of the memory of the dead are a cause for indignation. These people are genuinely remembered and mourned in Russia, unlike Washington and Brussels, which see their tragic fate as the latest excuse to criticize our country.

It is unacceptable to exert pressure on the law enforcement and judicial authorities of a sovereign State by telling them effectively how they should operate. This is particularly strange coming from our US colleagues, who accuse Russia without foundation of interfering in the presidential elections in the USA. Speaking of the organizers of crimes, I should like to ask my US colleagues whether they have finally found the people really behind the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

We have provided the necessary explanations more than once in the Permanent Council both on the course of the investigations into the murders of Anna Politkovskaya and Boris Nemtsov and on the situation regarding Memorial and the control of the activities of non-commercial organizations in general. Additional information is available on the official websites of the competent Russian authorities. We advise interested colleagues to acquaint themselves with it.

Thank you for your attention.