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**ADDITIONAL REMARKS BY
MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1374th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

19 May 2022

In response to the report by the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

Mr. Chairperson,

First, I should like to comment on the issue of mobile crematoria mentioned by the Permanent Representative of the United States of America. It is not entirely clear what crematoria have to do with the report by Ms. Teresa Ribeiro, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media. However, I should like to put an end to this story once and for all. The video to which the Ukrainian propaganda refers and on which the US representative evidently relies every time he tells us about mobile crematoria is a promotional video for the “Tourmaline” company from St. Petersburg. It produces incinerators for waste disposal. This video is from 2013 and is now available on YouTube. If anyone needs an incinerator, you can buy one – they are not expensive. I do not want to give anyone any advice, especially government officials who are well versed in producing fake stories, but they should nonetheless be produced in a better way.

Now I should like to turn to the statements made by the Ukrainian representative. Ukraine was the first State in recent OSCE history to impose a ban on another OSCE participating State’s media through a decision of the State authorities on the basis of the information content of that media – specifically, that it is allegedly propaganda. And then it unleashed political terror, during which, as I said earlier, many journalists were killed. These murders have yet to be investigated. The fact of the existence of this know-how on the part of Ukraine should therefore probably not be underestimated in the OSCE area. This has, incidentally, been perceived with complete indifference by a part of the OSCE community, primarily by Western countries, since 2014. The European Union subsequently adopted this practice of blanket bans on the media from Ukraine. And, interestingly, when there are accredited media outlets, they have the appropriate cards and they are seen as the press. And suddenly – the government says – it is no longer the press but a source of propaganda. But let me tell you, friends, that no one has given you the right to label a particular media outlet as propaganda on the basis of its editorial policy. The moment you do so, political censorship begins and media pluralism ends. The moment you accuse journalists, even if they are employed by the State media outlets of any State, of spreading propaganda and impose sanctions on that basis, pluralism ends and censorship begins. This is something that has been developing in Western countries for a long time. Whether you wanted it to or not. Or rather, you wanted it, which is why you were developing it.

Regarding what the distinguished Canadian representative said about the OSCE Ministerial Council decision on the safety of journalists, Russia not only joined the consensus on the document, but also took a very active part in its drafting. This was because we wanted the community of journalists in the OSCE area to understand that our Organization had played its part in actually ensuring their safety – not because we wanted the decision to be used subsequently for manipulative political purposes by representatives of other countries.

And finally, one last point. The Ukrainian representative said that he was outraged by Russia's non-consensus criticism of the Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media. I should like to clarify that there is no such thing as consensus criticism in principle. Although anything is possible in Ukraine's alternative reality.

Thank you for your attention.