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**STATEMENT BY
MR. ANDREY KELIN, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 941st MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

14 February 2013

**In response to the statement by Mr. Victor Tvircun, Secretary General of
the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation**

Mr. Chairperson,

We are grateful to the Chairmanship for its initiative to invite the Secretary General of the Permanent International Secretariat of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), Mr. Victor Tvircun, to today's meeting of the Permanent Council. We note with particular satisfaction that the Secretary General recently visited Moscow where he discussed current co-operation issues with Mr. Sergey Lavrov, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation.

This is a testament to Russia's responsible attitude to the BSEC and to our commitment to maintaining its leading role in the Black Sea region as the only fully fledged co-operation platform. This is because of the region's expanding role in global political and economic activities, the strategic importance of its geopolitical location and its extensive resource base and promising human potential.

Russia is a founder member of the BSEC, which was established in 1992 as a regional initiative and became a fully fledged international organization after the adoption of the BSEC Charter in 1999. Our country is committed to further developing and stepping up co-operation of all types within the BSEC, and in ensuring more practical gains from its activities. This pertains above all to such areas as transport, energy, environmental protection, combating organized crime and dealing with emergency situations.

Secretary General, we support your intention to focus the efforts of the BSEC members on implementing concrete projects. The biggest projects are the one on establishing a road transport ring around the Black Sea, connecting with the main trans-European routes, and the one on facilitating road freight transportation. Obviously the implementation of these projects will help to strengthen economic co-operation among the BSEC States and therefore to improve security in the Black Sea region.

The priorities of the Ukrainian Chairmanship of the BSEC over the next six months, as you mentioned, can also contribute to these aims. The policy of Ukraine with its double chairmanship of both the OSCE and the BSEC on transforming the Black Sea region into an area of peace, stability and prosperity contributes specifically to the establishment of a common security area, based among other things on economic co-operation among the OSCE participating States that are in the BSEC. The strategic objectives of the two organizations are in complete alignment here.

We also support your intention to step up co-operation between the BSEC and other international organizations and integration groups, including the OSCE. The fact is that our areas of interest overlap, for example combating trafficking in human beings as well as terrorism and organized crime. Co-operation between the two organizations on these issues will contribute to the collective efforts of the international community in these areas.

Realizing the objectives you mentioned will largely depend on the support of the BSEC participating States. Secretary General, you can count on the full backing of the Russian Federation in that regard.

Thank you for your attention.