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**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1147th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

25 May 2017

In response to the report by the Head of the OSCE Office in Tajikistan

Mr. Chairperson,

We welcome the Head of the OSCE Office in Tajikistan, Ambassador Tuula Yrjölä, and thank her for her informative report.

We hope that the forthcoming transformation of the Office's activities will allow it in practice to adapt its mechanism for co-operation with the authorities of Tajikistan, strengthen their co-ordination, and consequently increase the return on the mission's work. Only such an approach, in which resources are concentrated on the key areas prioritized for the host State, allows the OSCE presence to contribute as much as possible to strengthening national capacity. This fully corresponds to Article 41 of the Charter for European Security of 1999.

We note the Office's efforts to increase the overall competence and capabilities of the Tajik border service. We believe that assistance in maintaining the security of the Tajik-Afghan border is particularly important. Efforts in this area take many different forms. For a long time, the Russian Federation has contributed greatly to the training of experts for relevant departments of the Republic of Tajikistan on a bilateral basis. We intend to continue this practice in the future. In the light of threats from the conflict zones in Afghanistan, any additional assistance in this area must be effective.

We believe it is justified to consolidate among the field presence's main priorities the issues of countering transnational challenges and threats, primarily, combating terrorism, smuggling and illicit trafficking in drugs. We welcome the Office's practical contribution to mine clearance efforts and support the intention to continue this important humanitarian work.

We note the intensification of the Office's efforts in the second dimension, first of all, to promote the socio-economic development of Tajikistan, to spread knowledge about the "green economy", to improve the investment climate, to combat corruption and to ensure environmental safety.

Allow me to wish Ambassador Yrjölä and her team success in helping the host State achieve its priorities.

Russia and Tajikistan are long-standing strategic partners, co-operating closely and efficiently in a wide range of areas. We are invariably interested in ensuring that our neighbour Tajikistan remains a stable and prosperous State.

Thank you for your attention.