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**STATEMENT BY MR. DMITRY BALAKIN,
DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1226th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

2 May 2019

**Regarding the presentation by the New Chairperson of the Security Committee
of the OSCE Permanent Council**

Mr. Chairperson,

We should like to congratulate the distinguished Ambassador Luis Cuesta on his appointment as Chairperson of the Security Committee of the Permanent Council. We are grateful to his predecessor, the distinguished Victoria González Román, for her successful and useful work. We thank Ambassador Cuesta for outlining the Committee's forthcoming work.

We expect that the Committee will keep up the momentum of its activities and remain active as in the past, but also that its work will be meaningful, balanced and based on the priorities of all participating States. We trust that the discussions will remain depoliticized and non-ideological and will focus on pressing problems.

A number of important events within the first basket are scheduled to take place in the near future, including the Annual Security Review Conference, conferences on combating drugs and on cybersecurity, and the Annual Police Experts Meeting. They are all effective and in many cases unique platforms for dialogue that also facilitate an exchange of expert opinions and best practices.

We firmly believe that one of the Security Committee's priorities should be to strengthen inter-State co-operation to combat terrorism. Among the main counter-terrorism tasks we should like to mention in particular combating terrorist ideology, cutting off the sources of financing of terrorism, and the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters. We should focus on these rather than diverting resources and attention to secondary tasks. We consider it unacceptable for the tasks of combating terrorism enshrined in the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy to be replaced by a concept for preventing violent extremism, and for attempts to be undertaken to forsake intergovernmental co-operation in favour of working with civil society and non-governmental organizations.

We support the intention of discussing the issue of the secure use of information and communication technologies (ICT) in a dedicated working group. It is important to continue implementing the confidence-building measures developed in the OSCE so as to reduce the risk of conflict in the ICT sphere

and to prevent militarization of the information space, interference in the internal affairs of States and violation of their digital sovereignty.

We are pleased to note that these issues are included in the Committee's work plan for this year.

There is also a need in our opinion to continue to develop anti-drug activities. It is important to pool efforts to elaborate comprehensive, balanced and integrated approaches to combating drug dependence and drug trafficking, which represent a real threat to the security of the Organization's participating States. For our part, we shall continue, with the OSCE's assistance, to train anti-drug police officers from various countries within the Russian Ministry of the Interior educational facilities.

We reaffirm our position with regard to the inclusion in the OSCE agenda of security sector governance and reform, which is not a core theme within our Organization. We believe that this work should be carried out by the United Nations on the basis of Security Council resolution 2151. It applies to countries that have been completely destroyed by conflict and are in the stage of post-conflict reconstruction. There are no such countries within the OSCE, and we therefore reject the possibility of elaborating commitments of any kind in the OSCE on security sector reform. We insist that time should not be wasted on such efforts.

We call for greater attention to be paid to the problems of new challenges and threats emerging from the territory of Afghanistan and the southern Mediterranean. These problems require intensified discussion with the participation of experts, including those from our Partners for Co-operation.

We are counting on the Committee's active involvement in preparations for the forthcoming Ministerial Council meeting in Bratislava, notably through the elaboration of relevant draft decisions. We recommend that use be made of the ideas elaborated by Russia for the Ministerial Council meeting in Milan for enhancing the OSCE's profile in the area of combating terrorism and drug trafficking.

In conclusion, we should like to wish the distinguished Ambassador Luis Cuesta every success in his work and assure him of the active participation of our delegation in the Committee's activities.

Thank you for your attention.