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**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,  
AT THE 1139th MEETING OF THE  
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

30 March 2017

**On the international meetings on Syria in Astana**

Mr. Chairperson,

We thank our distinguished Kazakh colleagues for the information on the Astana process for the settlement of the crisis in Syria. We highly appreciate the position of the President of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, who supported the proposal of Russian President Vladimir Putin to create an international platform in Astana under the auspices of the Russian Federation, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Turkey, which would complement the efforts of the international community at the Intra-Syrian Talks in Geneva. The meetings in the capital of Kazakhstan, which were also attended by representatives of the United Nations, the United States of America, Jordan and the Syrian Government, demonstrated the relevance of this format in helping the Syrian parties halt the bloodshed and seek political solutions on the basis of United Nations Security Council resolution 2254.

We should also like to recall that there could be no conflict in Syria, if not for the gross interference of well-known States in the internal affairs of that country, the incitement of civil confrontation there and the encouragement of terrorism. The harmful effects of such actions have been observed in recent years in several countries in the Middle East and North Africa. The forcible “export of democracy” not only did not lead to prosperity, but also plunged the region into anarchy and provoked an unprecedented surge in terrorism and extremism. The result was bloody terrorist attacks around the world and the migration crisis that hit Europe. To rectify the situation, concrete steps are needed to create a broad anti-terrorist front. At the same time, help is needed so that the peoples of the region can carry out political and socio-economic rehabilitation.

Russia, in turn, regularly provides Syria with significant humanitarian and military assistance, contributing to the efforts of the Syrians to restore peace, tranquillity and stability in their country. Recently, a joint delegation of the State Duma of the Russian Federation and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe visited Damascus. One of the purposes of the visit was to form an unbiased opinion on the situation on the ground, and also to draw attention to the need for European countries to provide humanitarian assistance to the Syrian people. We hope that this signal will be interpreted appropriately to the west of Vienna.

In conclusion, we should like to once again express our appreciation to our Kazakh colleagues for their efforts to establish a peaceful settlement in Syria.

Thank you for your attention.