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Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,  
AT THE 1257th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

30 January 2020

**In response to the address by the President of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Georgia Mr. David Zalkaliani**

Mr. Chairperson,  
Mr. Minister,

We welcome you to this Permanent Council meeting. We hope that Georgia will conduct its Presidency with impartiality in the interests of pan-European unity.

The Russian Federation is ready to support the Presidency of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in its efforts to strengthen the Council of Europe's role in defending common democratic principles and strengthening peace and stability. The election of the Deputy Chairperson of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, Mr. Piotr Tolstoy, as Vice-President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe demonstrated the high demand for Russia's contribution to the work of the Council of Europe.

None of the areas of co-operation between the OSCE and the Council of Europe agreed upon in 2005, including the fight against terrorism and trafficking in human beings, the protection of the rights of national minorities, and tolerance and non-discrimination, have lost their relevance. There are other promising areas, such as the issue of artificial intelligence in the context of establishing fair international legal regulators in this field. We believe it is important to build co-operation between the two pan-European organizations in such a way as to avoid duplication and unnecessary dissipation of resources, while observing the principles of transparency and collegiality.

This year, it is important to devote special attention to the 75th anniversary of the victory in the Second World War, when the anti-Hitler coalition, with the decisive role of the Soviet Union, liberated Europe from Nazism. Collective efforts are needed against the glorification of Nazi criminals and their accomplices and attempts to falsify history and revise the judgments of the Nuremberg Tribunal. Acts of vandalism against monuments to soldiers and commanders of the Red Army who gave their lives in the fight against the "brown plague" are unacceptable.

Mr. Minister,

We should like to draw your attention to the situation in Ukraine, in which certain provisions of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms have been officially suspended in a significant part of the country, namely in certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, since June 2015. We urge that the Ukrainian Government's failure to comply with its international obligations be carefully reviewed and clear justification for its declared derogation requested.

We are puzzled at the fact that, since the beginning of the internal conflict in Ukraine, not a single representative of Donetsk and Luhansk has been heard in Strasbourg. It turns out that the Council of Europe is unwilling or afraid to hear the truth from those people who, under blockade and daily bombardment, have been teetering on the brink of survival for six years now. Instead, we see attempts by some countries to whitewash the actions of the Ukrainian Government, which is adopting laws on education and the State language in violation of the basic principles enshrined in United Nations, OSCE and Council of Europe documents. The Venice Commission of the Council of Europe recognized the discriminatory nature of these laws and made a number of recommendations that are actually being ignored by the Ukrainian side.

It is impossible to avoid identifying and punishing those responsible for firing shots at people on the Maidan in 2014 and for the Odessa tragedy in the Trade Union House, where Ukrainian nationalists burned dozens of people alive.

In addition, we strongly urge the Council of Europe to monitor more closely and respond immediately to cases of infringement of the rights of the Russian-speaking population in the Baltic States.

In conclusion, Mr. Minister, we wish you a successful Presidency and an effective 130th Session of the Committee of Ministers in Tbilisi in May. We hope that all official delegations will be able to freely participate in the session and experience the famous Georgian hospitality in full.

Thank you for your attention.