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**STATEMENT BY MR. ANDREY KELIN,  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,  
AT THE 998th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

30 April 2014

**In response to the address by Ambassador Ján Kubiš,  
Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan**

Mr. Chairperson,

We are happy to see Ambassador Ján Kubiš, Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), at the Permanent Council once again and thank him for his customary in-depth and interesting statement.

Thanks to the unprecedented efforts of the authorities of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the assistance of the international community, and in spite of terrorist attacks, the election on 5 April proceeded successfully. There was a high voter turnout. UNAMA played an important role in providing technical aid to Afghanistan in conducting the election. We also welcome the assistance of the group of experts from the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) in the elections in Afghanistan.

The progress of the main presidential candidates is being monitored attentively in Russia. We hope that they have sufficient political wisdom not to inflame the already complicated situation in the country.

While the elections in Afghanistan are attracting universal attention, it is important to keep the main problem in mind, namely the possibility of the security situation falling apart after the withdrawal from Afghanistan of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). We are of the opinion, unfortunately, that the situation could well get worse. Taliban fighters, Al-Qaida and other terrorist groups are resorting to a tactic of indiscriminate terror; they are becoming increasingly bold in their attacks on representatives of the authorities and the ISAF soldiers throughout the country, including Kabul, and are continuing to gain strength in areas formerly under stable government control. There are increasing numbers of victims among the civilian population and security officials. Three doctors from the United States of America were killed on 24 April in a hospital in Kabul. We express condolences to our United States colleagues.

The mandate of the new NATO mission, which, incidentally, still awaits approbation by the United Nations Security Council, should take into account the entire gamut of

destabilizing factors in the country. The way in which the ISAF mission is restructured could also have an effect on the security of the United Nations officials. It might also be necessary to reconsider the mandate of the United Nations mission in Afghanistan. We are willing to work constructively with our partners in this matter.

The impression is sometimes given that the international forces simply want to leave Afghanistan as soon as possible and to shift responsibility for security to the Afghan officials, whose capabilities are still a long way from the desired level. The reduction in the international contingent needs to be offset by an increase in the combat effectiveness of the Afghan forces, which must be in a position to control security independently in their country and to effectively combat extremist groups and drug-related crime.

Narcotics, which are produced in huge quantities in Afghanistan, continue to pose a serious threat to stability in that country, the surrounding region and the world as a whole. The prospects do not look bright. The production of narcotics gives a significant financial “leg-up” to terrorism. We believe that the international community should really concert its efforts to combat Afghan drug trafficking, with the United Nations playing a central and co-ordinating role.

One positive example of international co-operation in this area is the successful completion yesterday of the courses for anti-narcotics police from Afghanistan at the Russian Ministry of the Internal Affairs All-Russian Institute for Advanced Training in Domodedovo. The continuation of this extrabudgetary OSCE project, launched in 2007, has been possible thanks to a financial contribution by the Netherlands. At the same time, a key contribution to the teaching expenses was provided by Russia, which made for considerable savings. This opens up the possibility of further training courses for Afghan anti-narcotics police this year. We are sure that the need for training by the OSCE of Afghan anti-narcotics agents for that country, also with Russian participation, will grow.

Mr. Chairperson,

We firmly believe that real aid to Afghanistan is not possible without exploiting the potential of regional co-operation mechanisms. One of the main ones is the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, whose members, observers or dialogue partners include practically all of the countries in the region, including Afghanistan. In this context we welcome the efforts of UNAMA and Ambassador Kubiš himself.

In conclusion, we should like to wish the members of UNAMA and Ambassador Kubiš himself every success in their difficult and dangerous work. We are counting on the mission to continue to make an important contribution to the implementation of the Afghan Government’s priority programmes, which include security, governance, justice and socio-economic development.

Thank you for your attention.