

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1172nd MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

18 January 2018

**In response to the statement by the Permanent Representative of the
Republic of Kazakhstan on the high-level meetings organized in
New York as part of Kazakhstan's Presidency of the
United Nations Security Council**

Mr. Chairperson,

We thank our Kazakh colleagues for the detailed information on the upcoming high-level meetings on 18 and 19 January in New York – Non-Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction: Confidence-Building Measures and Building Regional Partnership in Afghanistan and Central Asia as a Model to Link Security and Development.

We greatly appreciate our Kazakh partners' initiative to organize these meetings and welcome the efforts to focus the United Nations Security Council's work on current issues that go beyond the interests of particular groups of countries. This affirms the Security Council's central role in finding effective solutions to the main issues currently before us in maintaining international peace and security. I should like to take this opportunity to inform you that Russia will be represented at these meetings by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation Sergey Lavrov.

We believe that this discussion of disarmament and non-proliferation issues is motivated not only by the 50th anniversary of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which remains the unquestionable backbone of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime, but also by negative developments in various parts of the world and the growing threat that weapons of mass destruction could fall into the hands of non-State actors, including terrorist groups. This danger is clearest in the Middle East. The Treaty provides us with the foundations we need to counter today's nuclear proliferation risks and threats, while at the same time pursuing a balanced approach to the Treaty's three main components – non-proliferation, disarmament, and peaceful use of nuclear energy.

We see opportunities for raising the effectiveness of international and regional organizations' work in this area to find collective solutions to the current contradictions. Of course, we should also take utmost care of the positive results that we have achieved in this

area, particularly on such important matters as implementing the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action that settles the situation with the Iranian nuclear programme.

Mr. Chairperson,

The particular focus on the situation in Afghanistan is also completely justified. This confirms our Kazakh neighbours' responsible attitude towards the threats to the entire Central Asian region emanating from Afghanistan. Dangerous developments are taking place there and a comprehensive approach is needed for regional States and the international community in general to respond to these challenges.

The many years of experience in international efforts to stabilize the situation in Afghanistan demonstrate the ineffectiveness of using force to resolve the problems. Solutions should be found through the launch of a national reconciliation process based on United Nations Security Council resolutions. We initiated this kind of dialogue through the Moscow format and resumed the work of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)-Afghanistan Contact Group. We support a rapid start to direct talks between the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the Taliban movement to put an end to this fratricidal civil war. We are always ready to provide a suitable platform for this dialogue.

The situation in Afghanistan has a clear impact on neighbouring regions' secure development. We note with concern the way that northern Afghanistan is being turned into a base for terrorists, with the dominant influence of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant. Afghan narcotics production is growing at an astounding pace and this means that financial support for international terrorism is growing too. This also requires clear and urgent countermeasures on our part.

Russia is part of this greater region and is making a solid contribution to ensuring its sustainable development and security. We have alliance relations and a strategic partnership with the Central Asian States. We firmly believe that only the construction of an architecture for international relations that has a collective base can enable us to provide a systemic response to the current threats and challenges in Afghanistan and in Central Asia in general. This architecture is possible only if built on the principles of inclusive and transparent economic co-operation, equal and indivisible security, and expansion of the partnership network between the different multilateral groupings.

We think it important to put the issue of Afghanistan back on the agenda at the OSCE Permanent Council Security Committee. This would fit entirely with the line of our discussions this morning on inclusiveness and raising the effectiveness of the OSCE decision-making bodies and their subsidiary structures.

Thank you for your attention.