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**STATEMENT BY
MR. ALEKSANDR VOLGAREV, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF
THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1514th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

27 March 2025

**In response to the report by the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental
Activities**

Mr. Chairperson,

We welcome Ambassador Bakyt Dzhusupov, Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, to the Permanent Council. We have carefully read the report on your ongoing activities and on your plans for work in 2025 and should like to make the following comments.

Russia's priorities in the second "basket" are well known. We support the implementation of projects aimed at strengthening trade and transport connectivity and the development of transport corridors, which are a key prerequisite for economic co-operation. We are interested in the introduction of digital technologies, notably in the public services sector, where Russia has good practices that we are prepared to share. We believe it would be useful to discuss the issues related to an accelerated energy transition, primarily in the context of the risks associated with such a transition. And, lastly, we attach great value to the fight against corruption and money laundering. In this connection, the Finnish Chairmanship's refusal to appoint a special representative on this issue, which is of critical importance to all participating States and OSCE Partners for Co-operation, is puzzling.

In that context, the launch of an extrabudgetary project to promote good governance in Ukraine, which is aimed at developing tools for countering corruption, is of interest. Perhaps this project will make it possible to take the first step towards combating the rampant corruption plaguing the country.

Co-ordinator,

We appreciate the Office's efforts to support political dialogue and co-operation in the economic and environmental dimension, which, despite the extreme politicization of the current agenda, has not, in our view, completely lost its unifying potential.

We note the Office's projects on the introduction of digital tools for countering corruption; water resource management; natural disaster risk reduction; smart cities; strengthening trade and transport

connectivity; simplifying customs and border procedures; promoting transport corridors; and involving women and young people in economic activities and decision-making processes.

We consider the Office's steps to strengthen co-operation with specialized international organizations to be useful. That being said, we recall that the activities of the OSCE Economic and Environmental Co-ordinator should be informed by the participating States' needs and avoid duplicating the work of other multilateral structures. It is also important in this regard to ensure an appropriate level of co-ordination with other parts of the Organization, including the field operations. It is necessary to take into account their specific characteristics and to work together to increase the effectiveness of the OSCE, and to be results-oriented.

Co-ordinator,

We once again draw attention to the need for greater transparency in the Office's work. We would be grateful for the opportunity to receive information about ongoing work on a regular basis during the thematic meetings of the Economic and Environmental Committee. We always look forward to your proactive participation in Committee meetings.

We insist on the need to correct the bias in the Office's activities in recent years in favour of the priority implementation of extrabudgetary projects, often to the detriment of ongoing work.

We regard as unacceptable and counterproductive the attempts by a group of States to undermine the constructive dialogue that has begun to emerge and to subordinate the work of the second "basket", as well as that of the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, to the situation in Ukraine. Such actions are contrary to the basic principle of the OSCE's work built on collective efforts and consensus and are leading to a deepening split in our Organization. We also categorically reject the wording "the war against Ukraine" used in your report, which deliberately distorts the essence of what is happening and goes beyond the Office's authority. As you know, at the OSCE there is no consensus definition of this conflict to which officials of the Organization are obliged to adhere.

There are also questions regarding the projects being carried out by the Office within the framework of the OSCE Climate and Security Fund Repository Programme. We believe it is necessary to strictly follow the letter of the Stockholm Ministerial Council decision on climate change, in particular the provisions on the OSCE's complementary function in the global climate action process, where the United Nations plays a central role. We see a possible contribution by the Organization in providing a platform for the exchange of best practices in this area. The attempts to include in project activities topics that go beyond the OSCE's mandate, namely the search for a direct link between climate change and security, are absolutely unacceptable.

Russia remains open to constructive co-operation with all participating States and with the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities in the interests of rectifying the sorry state of affairs in the second "basket". We are ready to support your practical steps in this direction. We wish you and the Office's staff success in your work.

Thank you for your attention.