

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,
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AT THE 1186th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

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On the 2019 OSCE Programme Outline

Mr. Chairperson,
Mr. Secretary General,

We have carefully studied the 2019 Programme Outline presented for the OSCE executive structures. We believe that this work should take place strictly within the framework of the current mandates, be based exclusively on the decisions of the OSCE decision-making bodies and also take into account the positions of all participating States and not the interests of individual groups of countries.

For the most part, we support the objectives outlined. However, there are still some fundamental concerns in terms of programmatic developments. Once again, we are obliged to note the significant bias towards the implementation of programmes in the human dimension. A specific example is the forceful imposition of the gender theme, whose interpretation in the OSCE is questionable. Such an unjustified bias changes the nature and purpose of our Organization, which should pay priority attention to strengthening security and co-operation in the OSCE area.

There has long been a need to conduct a comparative analysis of the programmatic activities in the three baskets. It should begin with a comparison of the financial costs for holding events in each dimension with a view to restoring the balance between the dimensions and making additional savings in the budgetary funds, in particular by reducing the superfluous events in the human dimension. We expect that the Chairmanship and the Secretariat will prepare such an analysis by the start of the budget discussions this autumn and devote a separate meeting of the Advisory Committee on Management and Finance to this.

Unfortunately, in the work plans of the specialized institutions, first and foremost the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, we once again see no proposals for increasing the effectiveness and accountability of their work. There is also no response to the comments by participating States regarding their programmatic activities. There are also no responses to the initiatives, in particular on the part of Russia, to optimize work in the human

dimension and save money on election monitoring. After all, we are talking about millions of euros that could be used in other, more pressing areas of the OSCE's work. Through the redistribution of internal resources financial support for work in the politico-military and economic and environmental dimensions, in countering new threats and challenges could well be significantly increased. This is an extremely important task in view of the considerable increase in the total costs for the OSCE, including the financing of its Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine.

As regards the Programme Outline for the field operations, here too there are substantial reserves for increasing effectiveness and optimizing their work.

First and foremost, all missions should be guided by the key objective of gradually transferring their functions to the authorities of the host countries. An appropriate strategy needs to be developed to enable us to move from the classic model of field operations of the 1990s to new forms of co-operation between the OSCE executive structures and the host countries on specific projects. As a result of such a transformation, substantial budget savings could be achieved by cutting programmes that are no longer relevant along with the personnel employed in them. Furthermore, when planning the programmatic activities of field operations, it is necessary to take into account changes in their mandates and also the sovereign right of the host States to determine the format and areas of co-operation with all the OSCE executive structures.

There is a need to supplement the Programme Outline through the addition of detailed information on the projects being implemented – both budgetary and extrabudgetary – with an indication of their aims, approximate costs, duration and personnel involved in local implementation. Of course, all these aspects should be agreed upon with the authorities of the host countries. We trust that such information will be provided to the participating States before the discussion of the draft OSCE Unified Budget for 2019.

We hope that the Secretariat will continue the practice of regularly informing the participating States about the use of extrabudgetary resources, as it did in November 2017. There is an objective need for such a practice in order, on the one hand, to avoid duplication of programmatic activities financed from the budget and, on the other, to increase the transparency of the resources used. We expect a report prior to the discussions on the budget.

Consideration of the Programme Outline for each institution and field operation will begin in the coming days. During these discussions, Russia will express its specific ideas regarding the plans for the work of these institutions in the coming year. We trust that they will be taken into account when preparing the budgetary proposals.

Thank you for your attention.