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**STATEMENT BY MR. ANDREY KELIN,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 938th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

24 January 2013

Regarding the situation in southern Serbia

Mr. Chairperson,

Moscow is extremely concerned at the serious worsening of the situation in the Serbian territory of Kosovo.

Just over the last few days, more than 150 Serbian graves have been desecrated in several villages across Kosovo. There was an attempted attack on the monastery in Đakovica, and an arson attack was carried out on an Orthodox church in Obilić. The memorial to the victims of the Second World War in Vitina has been blown up. There was an attempt to vandalize the Serbian municipal authority building in Kosovska Mitrovica.

The reason behind these outrageous acts was the dismantling by Serbian law enforcement agencies in Preševo in southern Serbia of the memorial erected by the local authorities to the Albanian fighters of the so-called Liberation Army of Preševo, Bujanovac and Medveđja.

We call on the international presences in the territory to take the necessary steps in line with their mandates to find and punish those responsible for these acts of vandalism and to prevent similar incidents from occurring in the future.

Thank you for your attention.