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**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,  
AT THE 1134th MEETING OF THE  
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

16 February 2017

**On the presidential elections in the Republic of Turkmenistan**

Mr. Chairperson,

We should like to congratulate our Turkmen colleagues on the excellent organization and successful holding of presidential elections on 12 February. For the first time they were held on a multi-party basis, with the participation of nine candidates who were nominated by three political parties.

This important event aroused great interest among international organizations. Thus, a representative Observer Mission of around 80 people from the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and the Interparliamentary Assembly of the CIS operated in the country. According to the Mission's assessment, the voting process was peaceful, organized and had a high level of citizen participation. The elections were described as open, free, competitive and as having been conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and the Electoral Code of the Republic of Turkmenistan.

The Observer Mission of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) also stated that the elections were held in accordance with the requirements of Turkmenistan's electoral legislation and its international obligations. The elections were declared open, free, competitive and democratic. No violations that would cast doubt on their legitimacy were found. It is worth noting that the Mission headed by the Secretary-General of the SCO visited 95 polling stations in various locations in the country. Observers operated freely, without a plan agreed by the authorities. Locations were selected independently by each member of the Mission, without encountering any obstacles.

The President of the Russian Federation, Mr. Vladimir Putin, congratulated Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov on his resounding victory in the election of the President of Turkmenistan, and expressed confidence in the continuation of a fruitful collaboration in the interests of the peoples of the Russian Federation and Turkmenistan and to ensure stability and security in the Central Asian region.

Thank you for your attention.