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Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. ANDREY KELIN,  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,  
AT THE 977th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

12 December 2013

**Regarding the situation in Ukraine**

Mr. Chairperson,

Ukraine is going through a critical time. Russia cannot remain indifferent to this situation. Ukraine is a strategic partner of Russia. Our peoples are linked by centuries of socio-economic, political, cultural and kinship ties. We have always been interested in seeing Ukraine strong and prosperous and will continue to do so.

We are firmly convinced that, as a sovereign and independent State, Ukraine is fully entitled to determine its own future and to conclude agreements with other foreign States and international bodies or not. We have always respected the decisions adopted by the lawful authorities of Ukraine and will continue to do so.

We have taken note of one aspect mentioned by the United States of America and Lithuania (on behalf of the members of the European Union) regarding the disproportionate use of force by the Ukrainian authorities in stopping illegal activities. We are surprised, to put it mildly. We all witnessed the way the camps of members of the Occupy Wall Street movement in New York and other cities in the United States were broken up. These situations were more innocuous as they did not involve attempts to disrupt the work of government agencies. And yet the law enforcement authorities did not hesitate to employ disproportionate force.

We still recall the extremely tough responses by the police in Germany, Greece, Spain, the United Kingdom and other European Union countries, but we heard no criticism of the authorities in those countries regarding the disproportionate use of force.

Thank you for your attention.