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**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1115th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

13 October 2016

**In response to the report by the Director of the OSCE Secretariat's
Conflict Prevention Centre**

Mr. Chairperson,
Ambassador Peško,

Thank you for the detailed report on the activities of the OSCE Secretariat's Conflict Prevention Centre (CPC) over the past 12 months.

We consider the CPC to be one of the key units of the OSCE Secretariat, whose effective and co-ordinated work is a most important element of our common efforts to prevent crises and resolve conflicts – the intended purpose of the OSCE itself and what makes it unique. We should like once again to note the professionalism and responsible approach shown by the CPC staff in carrying out the tasks assigned to them. This helps in working out balanced decisions on the employment of the Organization's broad arsenal of crisis-response tools.

The series of round tables, organized at the Chairmanship's initiative and with the support of the CPC, and the ambassadorial retreat on the conflict cycle on 9 September provided a good opportunity for a substantive exchange of views on the topics in question. The discussions confirmed that there is as yet no common vision among the participating States for further strengthening the OSCE's crisis-response mechanisms. We firmly believe that such work can be carried out usefully only through the development of the existing tools based on the principles of the unconditional observance of consensus with a leading role being played by the Permanent Council at all stages of the conflict cycle and the assurance of clearly expressed consent by the conflicting parties to measures proposed by the OSCE, along with an impartial and neutral approach and respect for existing negotiation formats. Ignoring these conditions will not add to the effectiveness of the OSCE's crisis-response efforts.

In that context, we should like to comment on the proposal mentioned in the CPC Director's report regarding the establishment an OSCE fund for conflict prevention and crisis management. Russia's consistent policy on this matter is well known. We see no added value in establishing a mechanism that would curtail the prerogatives of the decision-making

bodies. We do not agree that the existing procedure for agreement in the Permanent Council of collective measures is at times an obstacle to operational activities to manage an emerging crisis situation. In the case of the internal Ukrainian conflict, it has been possible where there is a corresponding political will within a short time-frame to develop the necessary response procedure and find the necessary resources for this. A clear example is the establishment of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM), which has become an important instrument of early warning, peaceful settlement facilitation and dialogue on the ground with a view to reducing tension.

For obvious reasons, the assistance provided by the CPC to the OSCE's efforts to resolve the internal Ukrainian crisis, in particular the work of the SMM in Ukraine, has taken on particular significance in the current circumstances. For our part, we have supported the allocation of the necessary resources to the CPC to ensure effectiveness in this area.

Under very tense conditions, the CPC also manages to provide equally effective support to the work in the "5+2" format on a Transdniestrian settlement and at the Geneva International Discussions on Security in the Trans-Caucasus as well as the work of the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office for a Nagorno-Karabakh settlement. We appreciate these efforts and trust that they will continue in the same productive vein.

It goes without saying that close monitoring of the strict observance by field missions of their mandates and work to increase the effectiveness of their programmatic and project activities for the host countries themselves remain important tasks for the CPC. We do not dispute the fact that many OSCE missions have made a considerable contribution to strengthening the institutional and socio-economic situation in a number of States in the OSCE area, thereby making it possible to increase the overall level of security and protection in the Euro-Atlantic region. On the other hand, several missions have been in operation for 20 years or more, and serious thought therefore needs to be given to the effectiveness of the OSCE field operations as a whole. A detailed analysis of their work in assisting in the national capacity-building in the areas covered by their mandates would not be out of place. During the discussions that have begun on the Unified Budget for 2017, we believe it important to clarify what progress is being made in the transfer by missions of their powers to the host authorities in accordance with paragraph 41 of the 1999 Charter for European Security and possible objective obstacles to this process. We are not against assistance to States requesting various forms of aid; however, such assistance must be as targeted and effective as possible.

Furthermore, we should like to draw attention to the increasingly frequent public statements recently by field mission staff containing political assessments of events in the host States. We would ask that such incidents be monitored more carefully and that appropriate measures be taken to ensure that the OSCE Staff Regulations and Staff Rules are strictly observed.

We are pleased to note that close attention is being paid in the CPC to increasing the quality of work within this unit on the basis of existing resources and using advanced information technology. This primarily concerns the work of the Situation Room. We urge the CPC to make an effort to ensure a more balanced representation of the participating States among the staff in its units.

We wish Ambassador Marcel Peško and his team every success in their very difficult work.

Thank you for your attention.