

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1101st MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

26 May 2016

**On OSCE activities to counter violent extremism and
radicalization that lead to terrorism**

Mr. Chairperson,

We thank the Director of the Transnational Threats Department of the OSCE Secretariat, Mr. Alexey Lyzhenkov, for the report on activities to prevent and counter violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism as per the Ministerial Declaration adopted in Belgrade in 2015. We note the considerable work done by the Secretariat and the field operations in this area in recent years. We welcome the increased attention paid recently by the international community, including the OSCE, to preventive measures for combating terrorism, particularly to countering violent manifestations of extremism. We support the OSCE's activities in this area.

We have carefully studied the data provided in the report regarding programmatic work to counter violent extremism in host countries. We believe that there are many indicators to demonstrate the relevance and importance of the steps being taken.

The report mentions 107 distinct activities to counter violent extremism by nine field operations and that 48 per cent of these activities were organized under the Unified Budget, a highly impressive figure in our view.

We have taken note of the focus on democratization of society and good governance. It is important that the work with the entire range of causes that lead to extremism and terrorism is not overshadowed in these efforts.

Overall, we support the prospects for further activity in this area mentioned in the report. However, we should like to make a few minor points.

In accordance with the aforementioned OSCE Ministerial Declaration, participating States and their competent authorities have the primary role in countering violent extremism. No other structure can take responsibility for the security of society and, accordingly, for combating terrorism and extremism.

Furthermore, the main focus in this important work should be on the guiding principles agreed upon and approved by all OSCE participating States. We do not agree with attempts to present campaigns that do not have a consensus basis, for example OSCE United in Countering Violent Extremism, under the name of the OSCE, an organization consisting of 57 participating States. The principles promoted by the OSCE for combating extremism should be agreed upon.

We firmly believe that countering violent extremism should take place on the solid basis of international law, first and foremost the Charter of the United Nations, including the principles of sovereignty and equality of States and non-intervention in internal affairs.

We assume that the OSCE executive structures will be guided in planning programmatic work by the mandates of the field operations, the requests of the host countries and the resources available, as specified in the Ministerial Declaration. The direct involvement of non-traditional donors (foundations and business structures) in financing OSCE activities to counter violent extremism is not in keeping with the intergovernmental nature of our Organization.

The OSCE could make a significant contribution to countering violent extremism by focusing on practical activities such as educational programmes and work with religious leaders and academic circles with a view to combating the dissemination of radical extremist ideology and the recruitment of new supporters.

In that connection, we suggest drawing on the potential of the academic community, non-governmental organizations, spiritual leaders and local authorities to raise the awareness of young people of the special features of radicalism. The goal of such joint work is to foster a sustained rejection of the idea of terrorism and radicalism in our societies.

We believe that all interested elements of civil society should be involved without artificial fragmentation or the pursuit of quotas.

We believe it important to improve and develop national strategies to combat terrorist and extremist threats. For its part, Russia is making systematic and energetic efforts to protect its citizens from the threats of terrorism and extremism. We are always willing to share the experience we have gained in this area.

Thank you for your attention.