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**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1165th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

23 November 2017

**In response to the report by the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and
Environmental Activities**

Mr. Chairperson,

We welcome Mr. Vuk Žugić, Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, and thank him for his comprehensive account of his work and future plans. We appreciate the Office's contribution to the success of the 25th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum and note its assistance in the productive work of the Permanent Council special committee.

It is important that the Co-ordinator has been focusing attention on questions of relevance to all participating States, particularly the problem of economic connectivity and partnerships, identified by the previous German and current Austrian Chairmanship as priorities. We should like especially to single out the transport element. Transport integration is a most important prerequisite for developing economic co-operation and strengthening stability and security in the OSCE area. It should not be forgotten that the Organization has successful practices and commitments in this field.

As Mr. Žugić mentioned, 2018 will be a significant year for the second dimension. Much has been done in the past 20 years, but we have to move forward and organize our activities with account taken of the common strategic task of further enhancing the unifying potential of co-operation. We support the idea of co-operating and co-ordinating the work of the OSCE with international and regional organizations. In that context, the statement at the Permanent Council of 19 October by Mr. Tigran Sargsyan, Chairman of the Board of the Eurasian Economic Commission (EAEC), and the participation of Ms. Tatiana Valovaya, EAEC Minister for Integration and Macroeconomics, in the work of the First Preparatory Meeting for the 25th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum and business forum in January this year were significant. Successful experience of this type emphasizes the growing need for building bridges and for participating States to work together to bring together the different integration processes. The creation of a single economic space from Lisbon to Vladivostok would serve as a basis for the future Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security community, the formation of which was the task set at the 2010 OSCE Summit in Astana.

This problem is dealt with in a draft decision on connectivity and alignment of integration processes in the OSCE area for the OSCE Ministerial Council meeting in Vienna presented by the EAEC Member States. We are confident that the relevance of this subject will also be confirmed at the parallel event during the Ministerial Council meeting in Vienna organized for 8 December by the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis with the assistance of the Austrian Chairmanship, which will be attended by the EAEC leadership.

We trust that the inclusion in the agenda of the second dimension of the alignment of integration processes will help build up trust between participating States and create advantageous conditions for developing business and attracting investment, in other words the necessary basis for sustainable economic development throughout the entire OSCE area.

All participating States are faced with the challenges connected with the risk of natural and man-made disasters. We believe that the Office should continue to assist participating States in exchanging relevant information and removing barriers to timely and effective international aid to the countries concerned. It is appropriate here to recall the statement by the Secretary-General of the International Civil Defence Organisation, Mr. Vladimir Kuvshinov, as keynote speaker at the Economic and Environmental Dimension Implementation Meeting on 16 October. We believe that the two organizations have quite a lot in common in this area.

We have noted the information by the OSCE Co-ordinator on assessing the impact of climate change on security. We continue to have serious doubts about the added value of the Office's involvement in the complex discussions on this question carried out for the most part within the United Nations.

We are counting on the expert assistance of the OSCE Co-ordinator in discussion of the draft Ministerial Council decisions by the Austrian Chairmanship on economic participation and "greening" our economies. We have not lost hope of achieving consensus.

We supported the proposal by the incoming Italian Chairmanship to devote the 2018 OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum to the subject of the digital economy, human capital development and good public and corporate governance. Russia is willing to make a constructive contribution to the forthcoming discussion on this subject.

In conclusion, we should like to wish Mr. Žugić and his team continued success.

Thank you for your attention.