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**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,  
AT THE 1093rd MEETING OF THE  
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

17 March 2016

**Regarding the inclusion of an American non-governmental  
organization in the list of undesirable organizations**

Mr. Chairperson,

With regard to the issue raised by our United States colleagues about the attack on a group of foreign human rights activists and journalists in Ingushetia, we already provided clarifications at the last Permanent Council meeting. We should like to stress once again that the Russian law enforcement authorities are taking the most vigorous measures to find the perpetrators of this objectionable and unacceptable act. Human rights activists and media workers must be able to carry out their legitimate professional activity unobstructed.

The President of the Russian Federation, Mr. Vladimir Putin, has instructed the Ministry of Internal Affairs to investigate all the circumstances of the incident and to provide a legal assessment. Both the local and federal competent authorities are dealing with the matter and criminal proceedings were initiated without delay.

Turning to the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, I should like to say that it is true that on 10 March 2016, the Prosecutor General's Office of the Russian Federation made a decision to declare the activities of that American non-governmental organization, funded by the National Endowment for Democracy established by the United States Government, undesirable in the Russian Federation. The Prosecutor General's Office informed the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation of that decision so that the organization would be included in the relevant list maintained by the Ministry and published on its website. The National Democratic Institute for International Affairs will be the fifth foreign organization whose activities have been declared undesirable in the Russian Federation.

We have given all the necessary explanations in connection with the Russian legislation on undesirable organizations and organizations operating as foreign agents numerous times. We do not see any sense in repeating ourselves.

With regard to the United States' concern "over reports that Russia may close" a certain "office of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)", we should like to note the following.

In Russia, there is not and never has been any office or subdivision of the OHCHR. The post of senior adviser existed in Moscow under the UN representative for nine years, providing technical assistance with the implementation of several OHCHR programmes defined by the policy frameworks for co-operation between Russia and the Office of the High Commissioner. The focus was on human rights education and strengthening national capacities in the humanitarian area (institutes of the Commissioner for Human Rights). There were never any official agreements on the establishment of this post – it was entirely an act of goodwill on the part of Russia. After nine years of successful implementation of the programmes, a fully legal decision was made to discontinue the functions of the OHCHR senior adviser in Russia since there was no further need for such work. This post may now be used to provide technical assistance to other countries. As we know, several countries have repeatedly requested this from the OHCHR.

We should like to note that Russia continues to co-operate with the OHCHR – no programmes have been closed, and Russia makes a voluntary annual contribution of 2 million dollars to that institution's budget. Therefore we do not understand our United States colleagues' concerns about this. To the best of our knowledge, in the United States itself, for example, there are no institutes for ensuring human rights of the type that operate successfully in Russia, thanks in part to programmes implemented in co-operation with the UN. Maybe an OHCHR office should actually be opened in Washington?

Thank you for your attention.