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**STATEMENT BY MR. ANDREY KELIN,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 955th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

6 June 2013

On International Children's Day

Mr. Chairperson,

International Children's Day, one of the oldest international holidays that there is, was celebrated around the world on 1 June. The idea was first advocated at the World Conference for the Well-being of Children in Geneva in 1925 and it was established as an official holiday in November 1949 by decision of the Women's International Democratic Federation. The United Nations supported this initiative and proclaimed protection of the rights, life and health of children as one of its priority aims.

Decades have passed, but the protection of the rights of children has lost nothing of its relevance. Modern challenges and threats to the life, safety, health and moral development of children in the OSCE area are becoming increasingly worrying and therefore call for concerted efforts by all States and organizations.

In our country, International Children's Day is not only one of the most cheerful holidays but also an occasion for carrying out a kind of review of what is being done in children's interests.

We believe that this holiday should serve as a reminder to OSCE participating States of the responsibility that we all bear for our future, in which every child is a most precious asset for society.

In this connection, we welcome the initiative by the Ukrainian Chairmanship to hold an event in "Artek" in July this year for representatives of the growing generation.

We believe that the protection of the rights of children should be the object of more intensive consideration within the OSCE. This is a highly uniting and non-political issue in which the interests of all participating States come together.

Thank you for your attention.