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FSC.DEL/158/19
17 July 2019

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO THE
OSCE, AT THE 921st MEETING OF THE OSCE FORUM FOR
SECURITY CO-OPERATION**

17 July 2019

Mr. Chairperson,

We are pleased to welcome the Acting Secretary General of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), Mr. Valery Semerikov, to this meeting of the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC).

First of all, I should like to thank the Tajik FSC Chairmanship for the theme selected for today's meeting and the opportunity to hear first-hand assessments of the CSTO's activities.

I am confident that the theme of combating security challenges is of interest to the vast majority of the OSCE participating States. After all, the real work of the CSTO on the ground is for the most part aimed at dealing with tasks that are similar to those facing the OSCE, namely countering a wide range of transnational threats. What is more, rather than fighting against specific States or fictitious threats, the CSTO is focusing on countering real problems, among which terrorism, illicit arms trafficking and drug-related crime are at the forefront.

In other words, the CSTO makes a significant practical contribution to strengthening stability and security in Eurasia. Its activities are a clear example of the consolidation of the States' efforts within the framework of an organization that operates on the basis of scrupulous respect for the independence of its Member States and non-interference in affairs falling under their national jurisdiction. Further evidence of the effectiveness of and demand for the activities conducted by the CSTO is the fact that various departments from countries that are not members of the organization traditionally take part in them. One of the most illustrative examples is the participation of certain NATO Member States in the annual CSTO *Kanal* (Channel) operation to combat drug trafficking.

In general, the current global instability and persistently high level of transborder threats make capacity-building among States and international organizations imperative. The political differences between them cannot and should not serve as justification for rejecting co-operation. Unlike the OSCE participating States, organized crime and criminals have no such difficulties. They endeavour to act in concert at all times. It is time for us to finally show some foresight too.

I should like to take this opportunity to remind you once again about the Open Address from the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Member States of the Collective Security Treaty Organization to the

Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Members States of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization on strengthening mutual trust and developing co-operation, which was adopted in Bishkek on 22 May. It has been distributed in the OSCE. I urge our colleagues to pay close attention to it and to seize the chance to establish dialogue between the two organizations to deal with urgent tasks of mutual interest.

In that context, it is encouraging to see relations develop between the CSTO and the OSCE. We hope that the joint CSTO/OSCE conference under the auspices of the United Nations on the “Role and nature of co-operation among international and regional organizations in combating international terrorism”, which is scheduled to take place on 30 October in Nakhabino in the Moscow region, will serve as a good example of practical co-operation.

We believe that the time has also come for the OSCE to repeat the experience of holding a meeting of the heads of the key multilateral security organizations in the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian area. I might recall that in 2009 the Greek OSCE Chairmanship held a meeting in Corfu attended by representatives of the OSCE, the European Union, NATO, the CSTO and the Commonwealth of Independent States. Later, this practice was also repeated by our Kazakh colleagues. The list of organizations could be expanded, in particular by involving the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation. Thanks to the Platform for Co-operative Security adopted at the OSCE Istanbul Summit in 1999, we have the possibility of developing within the OSCE equal and inclusive dialogue among interested international organizations. Full use should be made of this.

Russia is ready to do so.

Thank you for your attention.