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**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE  
1335th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

16 September 2021

**On the involvement of the Ukrainian intelligence services in sabotage in the Republic of  
Crimea of the Russian Federation**

Madam Chairperson,

I am compelled to take the floor in connection with the references made to regions of my country. First of all, we should like to draw attention to the incorrect title of this current issue. The Republic of Crimea and the federal city of Sevastopol are constituent entities of the Russian Federation, and the issue of their territorial affiliation was settled in March 2014.

We see no point in commenting on the fabrications voiced by our colleagues. Detailed information about the situation of the Crimean Tatars following the peninsula's reunification with Russia can be found in our statements at the Permanent Council on 18 March and 20 May, for example.

That being said, we should like to draw your attention to the recent act of sabotage in Crimea. According to an official statement by the Federal Security Service (FSB) of the Russian Federation, the incident involved one of the Ukrainian intelligence services.

On 23 August, a section of a gas pipeline was blown up near the village of Perevalne in the Republic of Crimea.

On 4 September, FSB officers detained the following residents of the Republic of Crimea: Nariman Dzhelyal, who had acted as an intermediary, and the direct perpetrators of the sabotage, Asan and Aziz Akhtemov. They are by no means political prisoners. There is a video recording of them confessing the deed.

During the investigation, it was established that the sabotage had been organized by the regional division of the Main Intelligence Directorate of the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine in Kherson – the so-called Tavria operations unit – with the participation of the extremist organization “Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar People”, which is banned in the Russian Federation.

It was also established that, in June, the perpetrators had travelled to Kherson in Ukraine, where they had received training in explosives from officers of the Main Intelligence Directorate. The Ukrainian

military intelligence service had promised them a cash reward of some 2,000 US dollars to carry out the aforementioned unlawful act. According to the detainees, in addition to participating in the preparation of sabotage, the Ukrainian intelligence services had tried, through the “Mejlis”, to organize protests of the Crimean Tatar population against the legitimate actions of the local government and law enforcement agencies of the Republic of Crimea.

An explosive device had been secretly transported to Crimea in July. The act had been planned to coincide with Ukraine’s Independence Day.

According to the relevant Russian departments, one of the organizers of the sabotage was Riza Yagyaev-Veliulayev, an agent of the Main Intelligence Directorate who had fled Crimea after a foiled terrorist act in August 2016, which he had helped to facilitate. Also involved in the crime were his handlers: Maksym Martyniuk, a Ukrainian military intelligence officer, and his immediate superior, Viktor Zelinskyi, the head of the Tavria operations unit. The sabotage had been authorized by another participant in the failed plot in 2016: Kyrylo Budanov, the head of the Main Intelligence Directorate of Ukraine.

Criminal proceedings were duly initiated under Article 281, paragraph 1, of the Russian Criminal Code (“sabotage”), which provides for penalties of imprisonment of 10 to 15 years. At the moment, intelligence-gathering and investigative activities are continuing.

We therefore ask that you refrain from distorting the facts and shielding those who have committed serious criminal offences. This matter has nothing whatsoever to do with the situation of the Crimean Tatar people in the Republic of Crimea of the Russian Federation.

Thank you for your attention.