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**STATEMENT BY MR. ANDREY KELIN,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION
AT THE 956th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

13 June 2013

Regarding the report by the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan

Madam Chairperson,

We welcome the distinguished OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan, Ambassador Gyorgy Szabo, and thank him for the detailed report on his work.

The Office of the Co-ordinator carries out a good deal of useful work in all three security dimensions. We note in particular the efforts to implement projects to combat terrorism and drug trafficking, and in the fields of good governance, fostering the economic development of remote regions of the country, monitoring the environmental situation, combating trafficking in human beings and improving the professional qualifications of public prosecutors and judges.

It is important that the field presence fulfils its mandate within the framework of the universal reform programme being carried out by the Government of Uzbekistan. We are impressed by the “step-by-step” approach, as the Co-ordinator describes it, to the project activities. The close co-ordination with the Uzbek authorities exercised by the Office in the planning of its work is most appropriate. It strengthens mutual trust and enables targeted assistance to be given to the host country in the areas where it is most needed. We trust that with the transition to the new project agreement cycle the results yielded by the Co-ordinator’s work will only get better. Constructive experience of this kind should be taken on board by other OSCE field presences.

We welcome the responsible approach shown by the Co-ordinator to the use of material and human resources, in particular the planned zero growth in the budget of the field presence. We also note the timely and full deployment of the budgetary resources earmarked for his Office, which is not always the case in other missions.

Mr. Chairperson,

Russian-Uzbek relations are developing dynamically and progressively. Political dialogue is taking place, also at the highest level. We attach great importance to co-operation with Tashkent in the context of the forthcoming withdrawal of the International Security

Assistance Force from Afghanistan, which is directly connected with the security of our countries and entails serious risks for the security and stability of Central Asia as a whole. In this regard the positions of our countries coincide to a large extent or are very close. This naturally makes it imperative to strengthen security co-operation.

In conclusion, I should like to wish Ambassador Szabo and his colleagues further success in their work.

Thank you for your attention.