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**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1231st MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

6 June 2019

**In response to the reports by the Head of the OSCE Programme Office in Bishkek and
the Director of the OSCE Academy in Bishkek**

Mr. Chairperson,

We are pleased once again to welcome Ambassador Pierre von Arx, Head of the OSCE Programme Office in Bishkek, and Mr. Alexander Wolters, Director of the OSCE Academy in Bishkek, to this meeting of the Permanent Council.

We thank them for their detailed reports, which have always been notable traditionally for their high information content and transparency, enabling us to fully understand what the Office does. We appreciate this approach.

We note that the main areas of work of the field presence are elaborated with account taken of the priorities of Kyrgyzstan and are based on long-term national development goals. The consultation mechanism with the participation of the Kyrgyz Ministry of Foreign Affairs makes it possible not only to influence the form of the Office's programmatic activities but also, no less importantly, to keep track of the implementation of projects and to assess their practical impact. The effectiveness of this interactive instrument is evident.

The Office's project portfolio shows a balance between the three dimensions, and the programme implementation is not limited to the Bishkek area. We are also pleased that a wide range of experts from various OSCE participating States and international organizations are recruited to assist with the projects. It is gratifying to see the diversity of topics covered by the Office's work in the first basket. We note the relevance of projects such as countering terrorism, supporting police reform, facilitating access by the citizens of Kyrgyzstan to police services in remote regions of the country, and capacity-building in countering organized crime.

We see efforts to foster co-operation between the relevant agencies in Kyrgyzstan and neighbouring countries to ensure a favourable situation at the border, which is aimed ultimately at creating more comfortable conditions for the citizens of these States and increasing the volume of cross-border trade. We consider it important that the implementation of projects with a regional scope should continue to be strictly guided by the agreement and specific wishes of Kyrgyzstan and its neighbours.

A number of interesting projects are being implemented in the second and third baskets. We welcome the non-standard approach to their elaboration, which allows the Office to operate “outside the box” to accommodate the various requests by the host country and, at the same time, to operate within the existing mandate.

I should like to mention in particular the Office’s attitude in favour of placing completed projects under the control and management of Kyrgyzstan. This is also an example of the implementation in practice of one of the key tasks of the field presence, namely national capacity-building. We remain in favour of increasing the scale of this practice in Central Asia.

Thanks to the efforts of Office Head Pierre von Arx and Academy Director Alexander Wolters, the position of this OSCE educational institution in Bishkek is gradually being consolidated. Its work is also becoming more transparent and hence also more understandable for participating States. We welcome the steps taken to encourage new training and academic centres to work with the Academy, reflecting the diversity of views, concepts and academic approaches throughout the OSCE area. We are pleased that Russian teachers are now participating in the Academy’s work, albeit to a limited extent. This enables students to form a more complete and balanced picture of the world and works to increase the competitiveness of the Academy itself.

As a long-standing friend of the Kyrgyz Republic, the Russian Federation is sincerely interested in the democratic and progressive development of our ally. We hope that the OSCE Office will continue to contribute to this practice. We wish the staff of the Office and the OSCE Academy success in their work.

Thank you for your attention.