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**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1082nd MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

10 December 2015

On International Human Rights Day

Mr. Chairperson,

Today we celebrate International Human Rights Day, established 65 years ago after the adoption on 10 December 1948 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Its principles have been developed within the OSCE's wide-ranging commitments, starting with the Helsinki Final Act.

We recall that the creation of the modern international system of human rights protection was possible thanks to the victory over Nazism in the Second World War, the 70th anniversary of which was celebrated by the international community this year. The countries that routed Nazism joined forces to lay solid foundations for the post-war world order and to prevent the repetition of such tragedies. It is 70 years this year since the Nuremberg Tribunal was established. It brought to justice those guilty of the death and suffering of tens of millions of people, the extermination of entire peoples and the spread of hateful misanthropic ideas, and recognized Nazism and fascism as a criminal ideology.

Those who attempt to falsify the history of the Second World War, rewrite its outcome, consign to oblivion the Nuremberg decisions and revive the Nazi ideology attack the very foundations of global human rights promotion and protection.

Mr. Chairperson,

International relations today are currently going through a difficult phase. In addition to the long-standing conflicts, there are new dangerous hotbeds of tension. Unless global and regional stability are consolidated, it will not be possible in principle for human rights to be effectively observed.

The new challenge presented by international terrorism, which has flourished in the Middle East and North Africa following the gross external interference in the affairs of a number of countries, has become one of the main reasons for the growing influx of refugees to OSCE countries.

We are seriously concerned that the protection of human rights is losing its original purpose and being used as an instrument for advancing the opportunistic interests of individual countries or groups of countries and for interfering in the internal affairs of States and replacing their legitimate governments.

This tendency is fraught with dangerous consequences, including the loss by human rights of their universal character. Instead of being a unifying force and working in the interests of progress and the prosperity of mankind, human rights norms and standards are becoming negatively charged elements of geopolitics. Narrow interpretations of human rights are being imposed upon individual countries and entire regions in the guise of universality, undermining confidence in them. Human rights missionary zeal and mentoring based on ideas of inherent exclusivity only worsen the situation.

Unfortunately, these negative manifestations were also evident to the full at the recent OSCE Ministerial Council meeting in Belgrade, where several documents on which consensus had almost been reached could not be adopted because of the confrontational or one-sided position of some States.

Mr. Chairperson,

Russia continues to adhere to the fulfilment of international human rights commitments and the development of constructive co-operation with civil society to promote and protect basic human rights and freedoms. Symbolically in this anniversary year, the President of the Russian Federation has established an annual State prize for outstanding achievement in the field of human rights.

In conclusion, I should like to stress that co-operation in the protection of the rights and freedoms of the individual must be based on equal and respectful dialogue without double standards and selective approaches and with account taken of the particular national, religious and cultural features of the individual countries and their historical specificity.

Thank you for your attention.