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

22 September 2011

Regarding the killing of Burhanuddin Rabbani

Mr. Chairperson,

We join in the words of condolence expressed in connection with the assassination on 20 September of Burhanuddin Rabbani, the head of the High Peace Council and former President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

The President of the Russian Federation, Dmitry Medvedev, sent the President of Afghanistan, Hamid Karzai, a telegram of condolence, in which it was noted that Burhanuddin Rabbani had made a major contribution to Afghan national reconciliation as head of the High Peace Council of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. His assassination confirms the need for a further stepping up of international efforts to combat terrorism.

The Russian Head of State stressed that our country is ready to provide our friends – the people of Afghanistan – with all possible assistance in combating extremism, which remains the main obstacle to the restoration of peace and stability in Afghanistan.