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**STATEMENT BY MR. DMITRY BALAKIN,  
DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,  
AT THE 1232nd MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

13 June 2019

**In response to the report by the Head of the OSCE Centre in Ashgabat, Natalya Drozd**

Mr. Chairperson,

We are pleased to welcome Natalya Drozd to the Permanent Council and are grateful for the detailed report as usual on the activities of the OSCE Centre in Ashgabat.

We should like to take this opportunity to congratulate you on the 20th anniversary of the OSCE presence on Turkmen soil. We are happy to see that the Centre now has clear prospects for improving the working conditions, commensurate with the number of staff and the scope of the tasks to be performed.

We are seeing a noticeable increase in the Centre's project activities and note that it has been possible to achieve this within the existing budget. The project themes cover all three dimensions, and close co-ordination between the Centre and its Turkmen partners allows these projects to focus on areas of importance for the country. We welcome the pooling of efforts with the offices of other international organizations operating in Turkmenistan, in particular the United Nations system.

We are pleased that despite the appearance of new areas of activity, the Centre continues to pay due attention to projects that have proved to be successful. These include capacity-building for Turkmenistan's border guard service, national capacity-building in countering terrorism and combating drug trafficking, and assistance in improving the storage conditions of stockpiles of small arms and light weapons and in combating corruption, money laundering and the financing of terrorism. We hope that the country's efforts to develop solar energy and reform the penitentiary system will continue to be supported.

We cannot fail to mention the consistent and multifaceted support for the work of the Ombudsperson for Human Rights, which is provided as part of an overall increase in co-operation with the Turkmen authorities in the human dimension.

Mr. Chairperson,

We support the efforts of the OSCE Centre in Ashgabat to provide targeted assistance to our friend Turkmenistan, the specific focuses of which are determined by the field presence and the host country

together. This synergy means that the OSCE can make a practical contribution to the achievement of national development priorities.

Russia and Turkmenistan are steadily intensifying their bilateral relations, which are multifaceted and friendly in nature. Various aspects of their development were discussed on 31 May in Ashgabat at the meeting of the Prime Minister of the Russian Federation, Dmitry Medvedev, with the President and Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers of Turkmenistan, Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov. Our States are united in perceiving Central Asia as a territory of good-neighbourliness, where sustainable prosperity depends crucially on regional co-operation. Russian-Turkmen relations are designed with this in mind.

In conclusion, we should like to wish Natalya Drozd and her team success in their useful work in the interests of Turkmenistan.

Thank you for your attention.