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**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1270th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL
VIA VIDEO TELECONFERENCE**

4 June 2020

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

Mr. Chairperson,

We are pleased to welcome the distinguished Ambassador Natalya Drozd and thank her for her informative report on the work of the OSCE Centre in Ashgabat.

We commend the high level of co-operation between the Centre and the authorities of Turkmenistan, especially as regards co-ordinating and agreeing on project activities, which is a prerequisite for the successful operation of any field presence.

We particularly note the Centre's efforts to ensure the security of Turkmenistan's land borders and airport checkpoints, and to expand the capacity of the country's law enforcement agencies to combat drug trafficking. This is important above all in view of the intensification of transnational threats in the immediate vicinity of the borders of the States of Central Asia. We remain willing to help improve the qualifications of narcotics police through training at higher education institutions of the Russian Ministry of Internal Affairs and to involve experts from specialist Russian departments in events held in Turkmenistan to exchange best practices and lessons learned.

We welcome the Centre's efforts to prevent corruption, money laundering and the financing of terrorism. We note its consistent support in updating national policy on the sustainable use of natural resources and environmental legislation.

We appreciate the Centre's targeted assistance in the achievement by Turkmenistan of its long-term national development objectives and in strengthening constructive co-operation in the Caspian Sea region. The importance of this area for the countries of the Caspian Five was confirmed by the holding of the first Caspian Economic Forum in Turkmenbashi in August 2019 on the initiative of Turkmenistan, timed to coincide with the anniversary of the signing of the Convention on the Legal Status of the Caspian Sea. This marked the point of departure for further development of regional co-operation in transport, trade, energy and the environment.

Equally useful, in our opinion, is the Centre's support for the work of the Ombudsperson for Human Rights, and for combating trafficking in human beings and domestic violence, and the increased co-operation with the authorities in the human dimension in general.

In conclusion, we should like to thank the distinguished Ambassador Drozd for her productive work as Head of the Centre and wish her continued success in her new endeavours.

Thank you for your attention.