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**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1095th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

7 April 2016

Regarding the early parliamentary elections in Kazakhstan

Mr. Chairperson,

We congratulate our friends in Kazakhstan on holding successful early elections to the lower chamber of parliament.

Overall, the international community gave a positive assessment of the parliamentary elections of 20 March 2016, which demonstrated Kazakhstan's ability to hold open, transparent and competitive election campaigns with a high voter turnout.

We take note of the large number of international observers, including representatives of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the CIS Interparliamentary Assembly, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and the Council of Europe. The overwhelming majority of international experts gave a positive assessment not only of the level of organization of the elections, but also of the actual voting process.

In the CIS mission's view (quotation from its report) "the elections in Kazakhstan were conducted in full compliance with national legislation and generally recognized international norms". No serious violations were identified. The country's population was observed to have shown a high degree of awareness, participation and interest in the elections. People quite literally went to cast their vote as if it were a public celebration.

The conclusions submitted by the leadership of the ODIHR mission were in turn studied carefully. We could not but notice that this time once again there were politically-charged assessments irrelevant to the relationship between the electoral process and OSCE commitments.

This point takes us back to the need to find a common denominator in international observation methods and draw up uniform standards for election observation which are agreed upon by all OSCE participating States. This is especially the case because the specific proposals to perform this task were formulated back in 2007 in the format of a draft decision

by the OSCE Ministerial Council on the basic principles for organizing the OSCE's observation of national elections.

Thank you for your attention.