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**STATEMENT BY MR. VLADIMIR ZHEGLOV,
DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1128th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

19 January 2017

**In connection with the question raised about the Russian law on
foreign agents**

Mr. Chairperson,

We have given detailed explanations on several occasions regarding the Russian law regulating the activities of non-commercial organizations, including those acting as foreign agents. We refer colleagues to our numerous previous statements on this subject.

We should like merely once again to emphasize that the listing of an organization in the corresponding register in no way restricts its activity but merely adds transparency. All are equal before the law, be it Memorial or any other organization having some kind of merit in the eyes of Brussels or Washington.

We would remind you that the Russian measures to regulate the political activity of non-commercial organizations financed from abroad are not unusual in the world and do not contravene international standards. Discourse about the term “foreign agent” itself and the extent to which it “wounds” somebody’s sensitivities is subjective.

Meanwhile, in the discussion of other topics here we have frequently heard statements from various European Union Member States that restrictions by them on freedom of speech, the media, assembly and association are supposedly intended to protect national interests and State security. For some reason, the EU says nothing about these cases – or about the multiple flagrant violations by the Ukrainian Government of human rights and freedoms.

As for the case of Zhalaudi Geriev, the raising of this question by US and EU colleagues really has nothing to do with the discussion of “foreign agents”. We are nevertheless willing to provide clarification.

Mr. Geriev was indeed sentenced in September 2016 to three years’ imprisonment in a standard-regime penal colony in accordance with Section 228, paragraph 2, of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation, for large-scale illicit drug trafficking. As you know, the

defence appealed against this sentence to the Supreme Court of the Chechen Republic, which duly considered the matter and upheld the sentence.

The fact that Mr. Geriev is a journalist does not exempt him or anyone else from prosecution for unlawful acts. We therefore regard suggestions of any kind of a political background to the affair to be inappropriate. If Mr. Geriev's rights were violated during the investigation or trial, the defence has legal instruments at its disposal to appeal.

I should like to say a few words about the claims by distinguished colleagues concerning Russian anti-extremist and anti-terrorist legislation. Russia has a comprehensive approach defined by law and implemented in practice to deal with the threat of terrorism, combining political and legal, outreach, socio-economic and ad hoc measures focusing on the preventive component of these countermeasures. This system is continuously upgraded and adapted to new challenges. The anti-terrorist laws were adopted as a result of the upsurge in terrorist activity in various regions of the world and the increasing complexity of the preparations for terrorist acts using the most up-to-date information and communication technologies.

The provisions of Russian laws do not have any political or discriminatory orientation. They reflect national and international experience in combating terrorism (for example, that of the USA itself as well as the United Kingdom, Italy and France). They were drafted with account taken of the provisions of universal international treaties, Council of Europe documents and decisions by the European Court of Human Rights. Expert consultations were held during the preparatory stage with the Presidential Council for Civil Society and Human Rights of the Russian Federation and with other authoritative human rights organizations.

Thank you for your attention.