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**STATEMENT BY
MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1351st MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

20 January 2022

**In response to the address by the President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly,
Margareta Cederfelt**

Ms. Cederfelt,

I have listened carefully to your address. I will be extremely frank: it was disappointing. Last September, I explained to you at length in this room that it was unacceptable to circulate one-sided politicized assessments, which deepen and cement the lines of confrontation in the OSCE area. As you can see, the European Union immediately took advantage of your assessments to use completely objectionable aggressive rhetoric in its own statement. It seems that the signals we send are either not being heard or are being deliberately ignored.

You are again falling back on an erroneous perception of the situation in Ukraine from the point of view of certain Euro-Atlantic assessments. Unfortunately, not from the point of view of the agreed steps for a settlement of the internal Ukrainian conflict, which are contained in the Minsk Package of Measures endorsed by the United Nations Security Council. We categorically do not share this Euro-Atlantic position. We are working in the OSCE, and it is the Minsk agreements that are the road map for a settlement, which was agreed upon in 2015. It is on the basis of these approaches that the current situation should be assessed.

Your interpretation of the talks held in Geneva and Brussels on the issue of formulating long-term legally binding security guarantees in the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian area was frankly surprising. Simplifying the matter to “high tensions on the borders of Ukraine” indicates a considerable failure to grasp the subject matter of the diplomatic contacts that took place. Let me make things clear: during the consultations, Russia had presented a detailed analysis of the factors that had brought the situation in the Euro-Atlantic area to a point of no return irrespective of Ukraine. We warned of the inevitable consequences of the continued military assimilation of post-Soviet States by the United States of America and NATO and reiterated this point of view in detail at the special meeting of the Permanent Council on 13 January in the presence of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office.

I am puzzled by your remarks about the need for a constructive dialogue on the “European security order”. I have to disappoint you – this is impossible, as there is no subject for such a discussion. As much as some would like to see this, there is no such thing as a “European security order”. There is international law,

the Charter of the United Nations and political commitments within the OSCE to develop the concept of comprehensive, equal and indivisible security. Indeed, it is this concept that was again enshrined in 1999 in the Charter for European Security, which was signed at the highest level by all participating States.

The tone you have chosen to take, Ms. Cederfelt, in your observations about Ukraine leaves us under no illusions: the Assembly is increasingly becoming a tool for serving the geopolitical interests of a group of countries bent on stirring up confrontation in the pan-European space. Their aim is not to swiftly resolve the situation in eastern Ukraine, but something altogether different – to find ways of using Ukraine as an instrument of anti-Russian policy. To this end, attempts are being made to distort the nature of the internal Ukrainian conflict, to shift responsibility for the implementation of the Minsk agreements on to Russia and to attribute to our country certain obligations under the settlement process that are not and never were in the Minsk agreements.

It seems that you ought to refrain from repeating unsubstantiated allegations about “the Russian violation of Ukraine’s sovereignty” and instead use the influence you have over the Ukrainian Government to induce the leadership in Kyiv to implement the Minsk agreements as quickly and rigorously as possible on the basis of direct dialogue with the authorities in Donetsk and Luhansk. The Minsk Package of Measures, endorsed by the United Nations Security Council, envisages an immediate end to the violence, an inclusive dialogue on the outlines of future peaceful State-building, and internal Ukrainian reforms in the interests of lasting and sustainable peace.

As regards the other conflicts in the OSCE’s area of responsibility, we urge that as responsible an approach as possible be taken to interpreting the nuances of the settlement process. This is a highly sensitive matter, which makes restraint in judgements all the more important.

We share your view regarding the importance of resolute international efforts to address the challenges caused by climate change. At the same time, attempts to establish a direct and, to put it bluntly, politically biased link between climate and security should be avoided. Effective co-operation among participating States in mitigating and adapting to the adverse impacts of climate change needs to be strengthened, as provided for in the relevant Stockholm Ministerial Council decision. That being said, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement remain the principal intergovernmental mechanisms for developing responses in this field.

As before, we support the desire of parliamentarians to observe elections in the OSCE area. Nevertheless, uniform rules approved by all participating States for election monitoring need to be drawn up in the OSCE. This would enable both the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights to redress the chronic geographical imbalances in this sphere, avoid obvious inconsistencies in the description of electoral processes in States “east and west of Vienna” and prevent dubious politicized decisions in the work in this very important area.

There are a host of problems in the OSCE area requiring a truly urgent solution, which you rightly mentioned in your statement. We are not only talking about the pandemic and its social and economic consequences. Among the topics requiring everyone’s attention are the rise in intolerance and xenophobia, the glorification of Nazism and the spread of the neo-Nazism virus. This is very important also from the point of view of the risk of transmission of these monstrous phenomena among young people.

In conclusion, I should like to draw your attention to the unacceptability of exacerbating anti-Russian hysteria in the Assembly. Despite the differences of opinion, we call upon our partners to discuss and resolve problems with an open mind and without politicized assessments. We are convinced of the need to improve the Rules of Procedure of the Parliamentary Assembly. Prohibiting the submission of draft

resolutions targeting individual countries would help to reduce the level of confrontation in discussions. The Assembly must not be allowed to turn into a platform for mutual accusations and the settling of scores. The truly democratic nature of the consideration and approval of Assembly documents by a majority of its members with a reliable counting and quorum procedure should also be ensured.

Ms. Cederfelt,

I suggest that you take another close look at our exchange today, especially in view of your forthcoming visit to Moscow. I trust that your political experience and wisdom will show the fallacy of a stereotypical black and white perception of the world. The sooner European political and intellectual circles understand that the Euro-Atlantic benchmark does not always tally with the complexity and depth of the processes taking place in the OSCE area, the better. It is this multidimensionality and interconnectedness that make our Organization unique and give it its strengths.

We hope that the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly will ultimately begin to act in the interests of strengthening the European continent's security. Otherwise, its value as a platform for dialogue will steadily diminish.

Thank you for your attention.