

PC.DEL/832/17
23 June 2017

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. DMITRY BALAKIN,
DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1150th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

22 June 2017

**In response to the report by the
outgoing OSCE Secretary General, Ambassador Lamberto Zannier**

Mr. Chairperson,

The Russian Federation joins in thanking the distinguished Lamberto Zannier on the conclusion of his period of office as OSCE Secretary General.

Dear Lamberto,

The six years during which you were at the helm were difficult in terms of relations between the OSCE participating States and hence for our Organization. It was a time when some questioned the added value of the OSCE. There was a strong feeling that the relevance of this unique pan-European forum, which has retained its tradition of strengthening our common security and developing co-operation even at the most difficult moments in our shared history, has been lost.

Your personal initiative, the OSCE Security Days, has succeeded in encouraging substantive discussion on the future and on problems of European security. It has created an additional opportunity for a direct and informal exchange of opinions, which has helped to improve the level of trust. We appreciate your endeavour to fill the Security Days with unifying themes and to preserve the creative culture of diplomacy. There is too little of this in our Organization.

Under your leadership, the OSCE has had to deal with the extremely complex challenge of the Ukrainian crisis, the result of years of accumulated differences and an unwillingness by participating States to adapt the system of European security to the realities of a multipolar world and to anchor the principle of the indivisibility of security in the international legal framework.

In these circumstances, the OSCE responded appropriately and expeditiously by deploying the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine, which was unprecedented in terms of its scale and mandate. The OSCE was talked about again in the world and its logo recognized

and, finally, it was no longer confused with the European Union or the Council of Europe. This was also a great achievement on your part.

Much has also been done in other areas. Progress has been made in co-operating in combating transnational threats and challenges to security and in the wide range of issues in the economic and environmental dimension. Dialogue on migration problems has also been intensified. The creation within the Secretariat of the Transnational Threats Department was an important step. We believe that it should be strengthened even further.

We note your skilful leadership of the well co-ordinated and professional team within the Secretariat. You have all the qualities that distinguish an exceptional leader of a large multilateral structure: a professional approach and clear adherence to established rules, and the ability not to yield to provocation but to create an atmosphere for fruitful and, in particular, informal dialogue.

We appreciate your skill at establishing and developing contacts with everyone connected with the problems of pan-European security and co-operation – with participating States, international organizations, including the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, and with the academic and political community. We have fond memories of your visits to Russia. We regard you as a friend not only of our country but also of the entire OSCE community. As they say in your country, “he who finds a friend finds a treasure”.

Your legacy is not only one of remarkable achievements but also of tasks that still have to be resolved by the participating States.

We have listened with interest to your thoughts on how to improve the effectiveness of the OSCE and adapt it to the challenges and realities of both today’s and tomorrow’s world. We agree that it is time to settle the question of the OSCE’s legal status, to correct the thematic and geographical imbalance, and to deal with double standards. It is also important to abandon the accusatory rhetoric that many representatives are guilty of. Emotionality and exploitative propaganda are not compatible with professional diplomacy.

In today’s multipolar world, the OSCE must assume its proper place and be capable of shaping a free, democratic, common and indivisible community of Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security from Vancouver to Vladivostok. The OSCE is not working from scratch towards this worthy goal but on the basis of a well-established *acquis* – in many ways, Mr. Secretary General, thanks to your active contribution.

We wholeheartedly wish you success in your future undertakings and thank you once again for your selfless and effective work in the interests of security and co-operation in Europe.

Thank you for your attention.