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**STATEMENT BY MR. ANDREY KELIN,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

19 January 2012

Regarding the parliamentary elections in Kazakhstan

Mr. Chairperson,

In connection with the question raised by the delegations of the European Union and the United States of America regarding the parliamentary elections held in Kazakhstan on 15 January, we should like to mention the following points.

A large group of representatives from Russia were involved in monitoring the election campaign, both as members of the observation mission sent by the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and of missions sent by other international organizations.

The CIS countries sent more than 260 observers, representing virtually all the countries of the Commonwealth as well as its Interparliamentary Assembly. On the day of the elections the observers visited 2,235 polling stations in virtually all the regions of Kazakhstan, including the city of Zhanaozen.

The head of the CIS mission said, on the basis of the results of the election monitoring, that the elections “were open, transparent and competitive and that they ensured the free expression of will by the citizens of the country”. The actual voting process proceeded peacefully and in an organized manner, in full accordance with Kazakhstan’s electoral legislation and the relevant democratic norms. The minor violations that were observed had no effect on the outcome of the elections.

It is worth noting that these findings coincide for the most part with the conclusions drawn by the Russian observation missions.

We support the call by the Ambassador of Belarus that greater attention should be paid this year to comparing the election monitoring methods used by the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights and by the observers from the corresponding agencies of the CIS.

Thank you for your attention.