

PC.DEL/355/13

17 May 2013

ENGLISH

Original: RUSSIAN

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. ANDREY KELIN,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 953rd MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

16 May 2013

On the issue of ensuring privacy in the United States

Mr. Chairperson,

We share the concern expressed by Ms. Dunja Mijatović, OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, on 14 May 2013 regarding eavesdropping on Associated Press employees – including through tapping personal telephones – by the United States Department of Justice.

Recently, reports by United States human rights activists and the media of systematic phone tapping of the telephone lines of private citizens, companies and media outlets by various State agencies and bodies in the United States have become increasingly frequent.

Information provided by the American Civil Liberties Union is of particular interest. It shows that United States law enforcement agencies are actively continuing to intercept and read e-mails on a large scale. In doing so, they do not consider it necessary to obtain a court warrant to inspect the e-mails of United States citizens, to say nothing of foreigners.

This situation indicates a further exacerbation of infringements by State bodies in the United States of freedom of speech and freedom of the media, which are, incidentally, also guaranteed by the United States Constitution, as well as of the right to privacy. We should like to recall that in 2012, even international ratings agencies not known for their hostility towards Washington significantly decreased their assessment of the level of freedom of speech in the United States. The journalistic community is, likewise, expressing serious alarm regarding increasingly tight media legislation that may lead to violations of journalists' legal rights.

All of this once again proves the urgency of efforts to strengthen systems for protecting the right to privacy, whether that of journalists and their sources, or of those they write or gather evidence about. In this regard, we regret that it was not possible last year to reach agreement regarding the draft ministerial decision on this issue proposed by the Russian Federation.

Thank you for your attention.