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**STATEMENT BY MR. ANDREY KELIN,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1025th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

13 November 2014

In response to the report by the Co-Chairmen of the OSCE Minsk Group

Mr. Chairperson,

We are pleased to welcome to this meeting of the Permanent Council the Co-Chairmen of the OSCE Minsk Group, Ambassadors Pierre Andrieu, Igor Popov and James Warlick, along with the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on the Conflict Dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference, Ambassador Andrzej Kasprzyk, and the Head of the High-Level Planning Group, Colonel Markus Widmer.

We share the views expressed by the Co-Chairmen. The OSCE Minsk Group remains the main negotiation platform for a Nagorno-Karabakh settlement. As one of the three Co-Chair countries, the Russian Federation will continue to play an active part in the mediation efforts to find a peaceful solution to the conflict on the basis of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the Helsinki Final Act, including the principles of the non-use of force, territorial integrity, equality and the right of peoples to self-determination.

We share the serious concern expressed by the Co-Chairmen about the downing of a helicopter yesterday near the line of contact in Nagorno-Karabakh. We associate ourselves with their appeal to the sides to observe the ceasefire and avoid steps that could escalate tension. We too regret the loss of life and express our condolences to the families. We are in agreement with the assessments regarding the inadmissibility of another round of violence in the region, as happened this summer.

Together with the other Co-Chair countries, we urge the sides to engage in constructive negotiations with the aim of moving towards a comprehensive peace agreement, to show restraint, to refrain from the use of force and to take immediate steps to stabilize the situation.

We commend the contribution of the Co-Chairmen to the holding this year of three meetings of the Presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan in Sochi, Newport and Paris. We share the view that these meetings were useful. It is important that there be dialogue, in keeping

with the joint efforts of the Co-Chair countries, and that the Presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan have expressed their willingness to continue this dialogue.

We support the work of the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on the Conflict Dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference, Andrzej Kasprzyk, and his staff, including their monitoring of the ceasefire regime. We support the invitation to the sides to adopt confidence-building measures that would increase transparency along the line of contact in Nagorno-Karabakh and the Armenia-Azerbaijan border, and reduce the likelihood of events like yesterday's incident. The agreements developed with the participation of the Co-Chairmen over the last few years on the joint investigation of incidents on the line of contact and the elaboration of additional measures that would enable such incidents to be prevented could help to reduce tension. So far, unfortunately, the practical implementation of the agreements has not been possible in full measure. It is important that all sides, including the Co-Chairmen, Armenia and Azerbaijan, understand that they need to work on this.

We note the useful activities of the High-Level Planning Group in the development of plans for the deployment of a future peacekeeping operation in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict zone.

We have always maintained that the main responsibility for ultimately deciding on a settlement option rests with Armenia and Azerbaijan. If a peaceful solution is to be found, patience, wisdom and mutual respect will be required. Without a doubt, any difficult situations can be resolved if there is goodwill. And, in our view, this goodwill exists. We are ready to endorse the solution that would suit all the parties involved.

I should like to thank the distinguished Ambassadors for their significant contribution towards strengthening confidence between the parties to the conflict and achieving a peaceful settlement of the conflict.

Thank you for your attention.