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Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1129th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

26 January 2017

**In response to the statement by
the representative of Ukraine on the Holocaust**

Mr. Chairperson,

I should like first of all to recall once again that the unconstitutional revolution in 2014 brought forces to power in Ukraine that are openly tolerant of extremely radical opinions. Today in that country we are witnessing the rapid growth of extremist and ultranationalist sentiments. Racist, anti-Semitic and nationalistic slogans are openly proclaimed. The authorities in Kyiv continue to legitimize Nazi ideology and to whitewash Nazis and their accomplices.

The Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) and Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UIA) and their leaders Stepan Bandera and Roman Shukhevych are being rehabilitated. It should be recalled that during the Second World War the OUN and UIA were responsible for the mass killing of Jews and thousands of Soviet civilians and partisans.

The Ukrainian Government is also conducting a deliberate policy of rehabilitating the criminal members of the Galicia Waffen-SS Volunteer Division. The Ukrainians who joined it swore “steadfast allegiance and obedience” to the Wehrmacht and Adolf Hitler. It is interesting to note that provisions prohibiting the condoning of the crimes of fascism and the Waffen-SS and those who collaborated with them during the fascist occupation were removed from Ukrainian legislation in 2015.

Actions such as these are incompatible with statements about adherence to democracy and European values.

According to the annual report of the Jewish Forum, the Anti-Fascist Committee and the Centre for National Minorities in Ukraine, there were 11 cases in 2016 of vandalism and 2 anti-Semitic attacks – on the journalist Yitzchak Hildesheimer and the Hassidic rabbi Mordechai Menachem Mendel Deutsch.

Quite recently, in January this year, torchlight processions took place in Kyiv and other Ukrainian cities – Lviv, Vinnytsia, Dnipro, Odessa and Zaporizhia – to commemorate the 108th anniversary of the birth of the OUN leader Stepan Bandera. During the processions, radicals openly chanted the anti-Semitic slogan “Jews out!”. This can be seen on video recordings.

At the end of 2016 in the city of Uman, a traditional Hassidic place of pilgrimage, vandals desecrated the grave of the tzaddik Nachman. Israeli politicians described this incident as an example of monstrous anti-Semitism and called on the authorities in Ukraine to find the culprits and protect the site.

In addition, at one time the Simon Wiesenthal Centre listed Oleg Tyagnibok, a member of the Verkhovna Rada who called for ethnic cleansing in Ukraine, as one of the top 10 anti-Semites in the world.

The most surprising thing of all is the absence of comment on these phenomena by the international community. Authoritative organizations, including the OSCE, prefer not to mention it. The European Union says nothing. Nor is there any reaction from the United States of America, which is known to have the largest centres for combating anti-Semitism.

It should also be recalled that during the 2014 OSCE Ministerial Council in Basel, when we were all working on a draft ministerial declaration to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the end of the Second World War, it was the Ukrainian delegation that did its utmost to ensure that the subjects of the Holocaust and combating neo-Nazism did not come up in the text of the document.

Thank you for your attention.