Delegation of the Russian Federation

STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1089th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL

11 February 2016

In response to the statement by the representative of Switzerland regarding comments by the leader of the Chechen Republic of the Russian Federation, Ramzan Kadyrov

Mr. Chairperson,

We believe that the situation surrounding Ramzan Kadyrov's comments is being blown out of proportion. Mr. Kadyrov was referring to the so-called "non-systemic opposition" – those outside the legitimate political framework of the State whose actions betray a wish not to stay within the trammels of the law and who declare that they are prepared to act unlawfully through unconstitutional means. The leader of the Chechen Republic expressed his personal attitude towards such persons, calling for them to be put on trial for subversive activities. I emphasize the words "put on trial".

I invite our distinguished Swiss colleague to take a more careful look at Mr. Kadyrov's comments, preferably in the original version. I also draw attention to an article by Mr. Kadyrov in the Russian publication Izvestia, dated 18 January 2016, in which he explains his position in detail. Even if it is delivered in the emotional style of the Caucasus in places, the core message of the article, which is about those bent on destroying our country, is that we need to act "within the strict framework of the law".

I might add that there are a quite a number of public figures in Russia who do not share Mr. Kadyrov's views. For example, the Commissioner for Human Rights in the Russian Federation, Ella Pamfilova, and the Chairman of the Presidential Council for Civil Society and Human Rights Council, Mikhail Fedetov. If social media sites are anything to go by, many ordinary citizens also did not agree with Mr. Kadyrov's viewpoint. This is normal practice for a country with fairly robust democratic foundations.

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