

PC.DEL/437/15
30 March 2015

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY
MR. ANDREY KELIN, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1046th MEETING OF
THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

26 March 2015

**In connection with the International Day for the
Elimination of Racial Discrimination**

Mr. Chairperson,

For several decades now the whole world has been commemorating the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on 21 March.

Combating racism and racial discrimination, which is nowadays ever more often understood to include ethnic discrimination, is one of the priorities for the international community. Taking action against this scourge is one of the main aspects of the work of many international and regional organizations, including the OSCE.

Alongside recent successes, many unsolved problems still remain. Moreover, in recent years there has been a noticeable significant increase in racist, chauvinistic, xenophobic and other extremist views and mindsets, especially among young people. Unfortunately, radical groups are also emerging in Russia. We are making serious efforts aimed at combating these negative phenomena in terms of legislation as well as in educating young people in the spirit of intolerance of racism, extremism and neo-Nazism.

Many other OSCE countries are also typically facing similar challenges, regardless of their political system, economic situation, history, traditions and other factors. Of particular concern are attempts to justify racist propaganda and likewise other radical views as freedom of expression. One is loath to think that people are beginning to forget the lessons of apartheid, Kristallnacht, the Holocaust and the mass annihilation of entire peoples in the name of notions of racial supremacy.

No one is disputing the fact that freedom of expression is one of the key components of a democratic society. However, the responsible use of this should not be forgotten. Allowing freedom of speech to be absolute carries the risk of permissiveness, the uncontrolled distribution and popularization of dangerous chauvinistic and other radical mindsets among the public; the consequences of this could get out of hand.

We call on all OSCE participating States to lend their most focused and unwavering attention to combating racism, extremism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism, aggressive nationalism and neo-Nazism and to find the opportunity for detailed discussion on fulfilling the OSCE commitments in this area.

Thank you for your attention.