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Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY  
MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE  
RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1374th MEETING OF THE  
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

20 May 2022

**On discrimination against Russian non-governmental organizations at OSCE events**

Mr. Chairperson,

The Russian Federation has regularly pointed to the violation by the Polish Chairmanship-in-Office of its mandate, which was approved by the 2002 Porto OSCE Ministerial Council decision. This is manifested in the overt promotion of the views and positions of certain countries and blocs, the deliberate framing of discussions from a purely anti-Russian perspective, the unwillingness to take into account the whole spectrum of opinions of participating States, and the adoption of arbitrary decisions in flagrant violation of the principles of our Organization's work.

The apotheosis of the arbitrariness of the Chairmanship and the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) was the Second Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting (Vienna, 16 and 17 May). Owing to the openly hostile context of this forum and Poland's flagrant flouting of the established practice of agreeing on a "package" for the OSCE human dimension agenda, the official delegation of the Russian Federation was forced to abstain from participating in it. We circulated a statement to that effect on 16 May (PC.SHDM.DEL/4/22).

At the same time, representatives of Russian civil society, including members of the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation and the Foundation for the Study of Democracy, were to address the meeting. Requests for registration were sent by the stipulated deadline and according to the established rules. A confirmation to this effect was sent to the participants.

However, right on the eve of the event, the organizers, referring to the CSCE Helsinki Document 1992, revoked the registration of almost all the Russians. Absurd and unfounded accusations were made against them for allegedly failing to meet the criteria set out in the aforementioned document. Only after our insistent demands did the Chairmanship clarify that it considered representatives of these reputable Russian non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to be "persons or organizations which resort to the use of violence or publicly condone terrorism or the use of violence"—without corroborating their statement with evidence or concrete facts, of course.

With this move, the Polish Chairmanship and the ODIHR, which serves it, have arbitrarily, unprecedentedly and maliciously overstepped their authority, without an appropriate decision by the OSCE participating States. In addition, they have effectively undone years of work by the relevant informal working group, which was established to regulate the admission of NGOs to OSCE events.

Moreover, in the best tradition of the blind Russophobia of its country's leadership, the Chairmanship categorized as "condoning violence and terrorism" organizations that are actively engaged with the United Nations. For example, at the end of April, the Civic Chamber hosted a session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. In early May, a representative of the Civic Chamber was accredited to the UNESCO World Press Freedom Day Global Conference without any problems. Not to mention the fact that the Foundation for the Study of Democracy has consultative status with the Economic and Social Council. The question arises: how do these actions by Poland comply with the spirit and the letter of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations concerning the regulation of regional arrangements?

Mr. Chairperson,

Even if they do not encourage them, OSCE functionaries do nothing to prevent so-called social activists recognized by national judicial authorities in certain countries as terrorist or as being closely affiliated with terrorists from speaking at human dimension events.

At the same time, over the years, representatives of Russian NGOs have encountered discriminatory attitudes from certain delegations, previous Chairmanships and the blatantly biased ODIHR. Attempts to challenge their involvement in the work of the human dimension have ranged from "tagging" them in participant lists to boorish attempts by certain States to prevent them from speaking even during the appropriate sessions.

However, it was under the Polish Chairmanship that discrimination against Russians became widespread and grotesquely ugly in form. The introduction of an exclusively in-person format for meetings, the labelling of respected social activists as persons and organizations "condoning violence and terrorism" – what more will Poland do to stifle an alternative assessment of the events in Ukraine? What elaborate fabrications can we expect from the Third Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting?

We categorically condemn what has happened. The scandalous incident involving Russian social activists, which took place at the instigation of the Polish Chairmanship and the ODIHR, discredits our Organization, which for many years has been a unique platform for the exchange of views between participating States and NGOs. Poland has once again demonstrated its inability to fulfil the role of Chairmanship entrusted to it, holding the OSCE hostage to its historical complexes, Russophobic views and bloc mentality.

Thank you for your attention.