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Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY
MR. ALEKSANDR VOLGAREV, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF
THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1429th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

22 June 2023

On “Pride Month”

Mr. Chairperson,

Given that my country was mentioned in a number of statements, we should like to exercise our right of reply.

Sexual orientation is a personal choice of every human being, an individual right that must be taken into account and respected. Discrimination on this or on any other ground is unacceptable. All people are vested with the same rights and the same responsibilities. This is enshrined in all fundamental human rights instruments. However, no international human rights treaty singles out lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons as a particular vulnerable category requiring special protection.

The Russian Federation does not discriminate on the basis of gender or criminalize homosexuality. The days of the Soviet Union, where this was punishable under the Criminal Code, are long gone. The Constitution of the Russian Federation guarantees to all citizens “the equality of rights and freedoms of man and citizen, regardless of sex, race, ... convictions, ... and also of other circumstances”. We have already commented several times in this room on certain provisions of Russian legislation, which the Western alliance countries try to complain to us about with absolutely no justification. There is no need to repeat ourselves; those who wish to do so can refer to the statements we have distributed previously. We would merely urge our colleagues once again to refrain from selective reference and distorted interpretations of Russian law.

Thank you for your attention.