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**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1079th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

26 November 2015

**On the situation in Ukraine and
the need to implement the Minsk agreements**

Mr. Chairperson,

Everyone here reads the reports by the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM) on the situation in Donbas, violations of the ceasefire regime and intrigues regarding the withdrawal of weapons. They disprove the unsubstantiated assertions by the representatives of the United States of America and Ukraine regarding Kyiv's irreproachable implementation of the Minsk Package of Measures.

Attempts to justify Kyiv's claims to certain "allowances" in the implementation of the Minsk agreements by the equally baseless declarations that Ukraine is allegedly the victim are irrelevant. You need to plainly implement what you sign, and you shouldn't expect any allowances to be made.

We are dumbfounded at the behaviour of the so-called volunteer battalions, which, despite all Kyiv's assurances, live according to their own rules and have no aversion to pillaging, looting and violence against the local inhabitants.

The inhumane and essentially separatist blockade of Donbas is not helping to restore the country's unity. Depriving the region's inhabitants of their pensions and welfare payments and hindering the delivery of food and essential goods show that Kyiv is treating the inhabitants of the region as aliens rather than its own citizens.

The authorities in Kyiv have less and less control over the situation. The county's leadership has still not provided a clear assessment of the blowing up of power lines in the Kherson region. Either Kyiv supports such actions and in that case must take full responsibility for them, or it condemns them and then it must bring the guilty parties to justice. All in all, the attempt to impose a blockade on the Republic of Crimea and Sevastopol is an astonishing development. The group of so-called activists led by Mustafa Dzhemilev and Lenur Islamov is attempting to "return Crimea", openly mocking its population. The

words of the Right Sector leaders that “Crimea will be Ukrainian or depopulated” couldn’t be more on the mark here.

Remember, esteemed colleagues, that each time you recite something about Crimea allegedly being Ukrainian, you are also endorsing the actions of Dzhemilev and his team. You are insulting the inhabitants of the Republic of Crimea and Sevastopol, and disrespecting their conscious choice to achieve what they have been waiting for for more than 20 years and for which Dzhemilev and Right Sector are now attempting to punish them.

Mr. Chairperson,

Recent events confirm that Kyiv will do everything possible to delay the implementation of the Package of Measures, particularly its political part, which provides for agreement with the representatives of Donbas on the modalities of local elections and elements of constitutional reform concerning Donbas.

We welcome the work of the Trilateral Contact Group and its specialist subgroups. We note that the subgroup on political issues has now firmly moved to a system of two-day meetings. There is, however, still no visible progress on key political issues. The language of ultimatums does not work here. Kyiv must not try to impose the existing legislation, the inadequacy of which was demonstrated during the local elections, and should instead work constructively with Donetsk and Luhansk to draw up mutually acceptable election modalities.

We understand that it will be difficult for the Verkhovna Rada to pass a compromise agreement in keeping with the goals of a peaceful settlement. However, without this, dialogue on returning control of this segment of the State border to Ukraine will be impossible. All those who make any connections between the further development of relations between States in the OSCE area and full implementation of the Minsk agreements need to bear this in mind.

Mr. Chairperson

The OSCE has done a great deal to de-escalate the Ukrainian crisis. This has been possible thanks to its unique features as a forum for inclusive dialogue on the basis of equal rights. It is capable, thanks to the consensus rule, of adopting genuinely collective decisions that are in the interests of all participating States. We commend the work of the SMM, the Special Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office to the Trilateral Contact Group and the co-ordinators of the specialist subgroups. We trust that the OSCE’s role will be properly reflected at the forthcoming Ministerial Council meeting in Belgrade.

There is no alternative to implementing the Package of Measures. It is important to systematically strengthen confidence between the parties and help them to reach compromises and arrive at concrete results in the near future. This would be furthered by putting an end to the so-called anti-terrorist operation, lifting the blockade of Donbas and agreeing on modalities for local elections. International support is extremely important for Ukraine, and Western partners could give Kyiv the necessary confidence to move towards a peaceful settlement and not a military build-up and inflaming of tensions in Donbas.

Thank you for your attention.