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Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,  
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OSCE ANNUAL SECURITY REVIEW CONFERENCE**

1 September 2021

**Closing session**

Madam Chairperson,

We have taken note of the efforts by the Swedish Chairmanship and the OSCE Secretariat to organize the Annual Security Review Conference (ASRC), which this year, owing to a number of circumstances, took place at a later date than the time frame established in the relevant 2002 Ministerial Council decision.

However, although the very fact that the event was held is gratifying, its content has once again been disappointing, like last year. The format devised almost 20 years ago for a broad exchange of views on and search for agreed approaches to pressing security issues in the OSCE area has, unfortunately, degenerated to the level of an arena for exercises in political demagoguery and juggling with ideological clichés, where a negative agenda prevails.

Unfortunately, this year too, the concept for the ASRC did not reflect the objectives laid down in the fundamental ministerial decision from 2002. Instead of giving priority to examination of the OSCE's activities in tackling contemporary challenges and threats to security and stability and of the implementation of commitments in combating terrorism, and to a broad review of politico-military problems and ways of overcoming these, the focus was once again on conflicts and on the OSCE's role in their resolution. Moreover, many have preferred to carry on the conversation in an aggressively confrontational manner, using language that has little to do with dialogue or indeed with the ethos of diplomacy. Such an approach is pernicious and naturally elicits rejection: it is clearly inconsistent with the nature of our Organization, its principles or the "back to basics" motto proclaimed by the Chairmanship.

Despite the serious challenges in the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian areas, many participants either concentrated on frankly secondary issues or relayed openly Russophobic arguments, accusing my country of being responsibly for pretty much all the world's woes. Real problems, on the other hand – for example, the situation in Afghanistan and the rise in terrorism, the demolition of almost the entire arms control architecture established over many decades with the active assistance of the CSCE/OSCE, or the emergence of dividing lines in Europe – have been left out of the discussion.

It is evident that our Organization is now a long way from implementing its approved mandate; it is steadily losing its integrity and the internal “cracks” are widening. Yet, as we have seen, most of the participating States have neither the political will nor the desire to change this trend.

We continue to observe politicized speculations with regard to what is happening in Ukraine. By the way, global events in the past few weeks clearly show how important it is to assess, in a sober and timely manner, real as opposed to imaginary threats – to analyse a situation realistically, without ideological blinkers, the wearing of which comes at the price of great suffering for civilians. Instead of a professional exchange of views on ways out of the crisis, we once again heard hackneyed and toxic fabrications of propaganda from a number of participating States that spoke about Ukraine. The logic behind their actions has evidently nothing to do with a desire to help bring to an end the conflict in eastern Ukraine as quickly as possible. Quite the opposite in fact: what we are dealing with here is an attempt to use the cultivation of anti-Russian sentiment and Russophobia within Ukraine as a means of diverting attention from the Ukrainian Government’s non-implementation of the Minsk agreements and its evasion of direct dialogue with the representatives of Donbas as provided for therein. The discussions on other conflicts in the OSCE’s area of responsibility were also marked by an unacceptably high confrontational intensity.

The approaching 50th anniversary of the OSCE, which was referred to in a number of statements, is a kind of “moment of truth” for our Organization: a crossroads which will either confirm its value and usefulness for future generations or consign it, as it were, to the lumber room of history as something obsolete. It depends on us alone to what extent the OSCE will remain useful and its services continue to be in demand. The task of enhancing its effectiveness and adapting it to changing needs so as to create a common space of equal and indivisible security is long overdue.

The Russian delegation would like to make a few specific proposals and recommendations.

1. The future Polish OSCE Chairmanship should, together with the future Chairpersons of the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) and in consultation with the participating States, establish a modified agenda for the 2022 ASRC in full compliance with the provisions of the 2002 Porto Ministerial Council decision.
2. The Chairmanship should, together with the Secretariat and the executive structures, prepare specific proposals (“road maps”) for the implementation of the strategy documents on combating terrorism and addressing threats to security and stability in the twenty-first century that were adopted at the Ministerial Council meetings in Bucharest (2001) and Maastricht (2003), respectively. It should likewise proceed to conduct a series of joint meetings of the Permanent Council and the FSC aimed at the comprehensive review of these issues and at reaching agreement on joint recommendations for the 2022 ASRC and future conferences, and also for Ministerial Council meetings.
3. The Secretariat and the Conflict Prevention Centre should – together with the field operations on the ground and the Special Representatives of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office dealing with conflicts, and in consultation with the participating States – analyse the state of affairs regarding the mechanisms used for conflict settlement under the existing negotiation formats and express their thoughts on the effectiveness of the work in this area for subsequent discussion at the Permanent Council.
4. Within the framework of the Structured Dialogue and other appropriate formats, there should be an intensification of dialogue on current issues related to politico-military stability in the OSCE’s area of responsibility drawing on, *inter alia*, the directives of the Hamburg Ministerial Council (2016) and other previously adopted binding decisions of our Organization’s decision-making bodies, the aim being to reinvigorate the politico-military dimension.

5. Representatives of international (above all the United Nations), regional and subregional organizations that are directly engaged in matters of security and are developing partnerships with the OSCE should in future be actively involved in the ASRC. To that end, the provisions of the Platform for Co-operative Security adopted at the Istanbul Summit in 1999 should be made use of more vigorously.

We trust that the aforementioned ideas will be reflected in the report summarizing this Conference and that they may perhaps help with the substantive preparations for the forthcoming Ministerial Council meeting in Stockholm.

We expect future OSCE Chairmanships to focus, when organizing ASRCs, on working out ways of using this forum as effectively as possible for the discussion of pressing issues related to Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security and on finding unifying factors, compromises and mutually advantageous solutions, rather than on further accelerating the spiral of confrontation.

I request that this statement be attached to the journal of the closing session of the Conference.

Thank you for your attention.