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**STATEMENT BY MR. ANDREY KELIN,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 912th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

17 May 2012

**In response to the concerns over the suppression of illegal acts by
participants in the demonstrations in Moscow**

Mr. Chairperson,

We have taken note of our colleagues' concern over the detention of rioters and participants in illegal acts in Moscow at the beginning of May. We already set out our position on this matter at the last meeting of the Permanent Council. Let us recall the main points.

The disturbances were provoked by the organizers of and participants in the events on Bolotnaya Square on 6 May, who called for the march to deviate from the agreed route and for mass defiance of police orders. In particular, the provocateurs released tear gas into the crowd and began hurling stones and bottles, which injured demonstrators, journalists and police officers. Unknown persons also attempted to wrestle with reporters from the NTV television company and damaged their equipment. Law enforcement officers had to put a stop to these unlawful activities in strict accordance with the law. In doing so, 29 police officers were hurt, and 3 sustained bodily injuries: brain injuries, concussion, fractures, wounds and bruises to various parts of the body as well as chemical burns to the eyes.

Against this background, we in all sincerity fail to understand the sense of the statement by the representative of the European Union (EU). There are no grounds for referring to the detained provocateurs as leaders of the opposition. They do not head political parties in an organized form. They are rather hooligans. The EU's calls today sound particularly strange in the light of the huge problems which currently exist in the EU countries themselves, but which our partners constantly avoid discussing, although the violations occurring there affect the entire range of fundamental freedoms – freedom of thought, conscience, religion, the media, assembly, association, movement, etc.

Television channels have of late been full of images of police force, frequently brutal and disproportionate, being used to break up demonstrations brought about by the exacerbation of economic difficulties. In particular, the camp of the Occupy Frankfurt am Main movement was removed from the city this week. Earlier, police in Naples used truncheons and tear gas against citizens unhappy with the increase in taxes. At the start of

April, police used flash grenades and tear gas to disperse demonstrators in front of the Greek Parliament in Athens. During mass protests in Spain at the end of March, law enforcement officers used tear gas and rubber bullets against demonstrators, resulting in dozens of people being injured, and more than 150 being detained and taken to police stations. We are convinced that representatives of the media were among them, and this cannot but raise concern on our part.

This is just a short list of such incidents in European countries. We would be grateful to the European Union for information on each of these aforementioned subjects. There are also serious problems as regards other items on the OSCE's human rights agenda. They were examined in detail at the start of this week in the State Duma of the Russian Federation. They are also set out in today's statement. However, in order not to take up the Permanent Council's time, we shall circulate this information in written form.

A consistent rise in xenophobia, aggressive nationalism and neo-Nazism is being observed in many EU Member States.

The most serious human rights problems in the European Union include trafficking in human beings, including for the purpose of harvesting human organs, the insufficient protection of children, including against cruelty, sexual exploitation and pornography, the violation of freedom of movement and of the rights of refugees, migrants and prisoners, and restrictions on freedom of the media. The situation of Roma and Sinti living in the EU remains difficult.

This by no means complete list is contained, in particular, in the European Parliament resolution on the human rights situation in the EU. Many of the problems mentioned are being further exacerbated by the economic and financial crisis gripping Europe.

The situation as regards ensuring the rights of the Russian-speaking population in Latvia and Estonia is completely intolerable, as is the failure to resolve what is a disgraceful problem for the European community, namely that of the so-called non-citizens. We cannot but be alarmed at the Baltic countries' policy of glorifying the Nazis and their local henchmen. This is a powerful factor in ratcheting up extremist sentiments, nationalism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and racial and religious intolerance in society.

I shall cite a few more specific examples – by no means exhaustive – from different countries.

The situation regarding the observance of human rights in the United Kingdom remains adverse. It is characterized by significant manifestations of racism and xenophobia and the continuing practice of deporting migrants to countries where they are threatened with torture and persecution by the authorities. Human rights organizations are well aware of failures in the British prison system, increasingly frequent fatal incidents at temporary holding centres for immigrants, cases of persons suspected of terrorism being tortured by the British intelligence services and attempts to introduce new elements of State regulation to the media market in connection with the illegal tapping of telephone lines.

The situation regarding the observance of human rights in Denmark is complex and there has recently been a noticeable increase in xenophobia there. This is one of the results of excessive tightening of the migration policy. Cases involving the forcible deportation from

Denmark of citizens of Romania, Hungary and other Eastern European countries have become a regular occurrence. Districts with a predominantly non-Danish ethnic population, a kind of ghetto, have sprung up in some parts of the country.

According to information from the Danish Institute for Human Rights, there have been instances when the country has violated international convention standards. Human rights advocates are urging Copenhagen to co-operate more closely with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Between 2004 and 2010, Denmark not only denied citizenship to dozens of refugees from Palestine, but also concealed this information from the UNHCR.

There have been reports in the media about special Internet sites operating in the Netherlands and Belgium, whose purpose is to collect “compromising information” about immigrants living in those countries.

Problems are mounting with respect to the human rights situation in Poland, which last year was included by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in the list of countries with serious problems regarding the implementation of rulings by the European Court of Human Rights. This concerns judicial red tape, the abuse of temporary detention, which becomes detention for unjustifiably long periods, overcrowding in prisons and a poor level of medical care for prisoners.

The whole story about the secret CIA prisons located on Polish territory does nothing for the country’s European image. There is information regarding flagrant violations of human rights norms and standards in these prisons, including the use of torture.

Many EU countries are in no hurry to undertake international commitments. At the same time, the European Union is calling on Russia to ratify conventions that have not yet been ratified by some of its Member States. A number of EU countries have made reservations to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. A number of protocols to the European Convention on Human Rights, the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and other important instruments have not been ratified.

The protection and promotion of human rights in the EU is the prerogative of the Member States. In this connection, the functions of the European Commission and of the basic monitoring agencies within the EU, such as the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights and the EU Ombudsman, are of a limited nature. For this reason, there has still not been a proper critical analysis of the state of affairs in the individual EU countries, and this is leading to a build-up of problems and to problems on a larger scale.

A significant number of recommendations have been made to the European Union by international human rights monitoring mechanisms within the United Nations and the Council of Europe. Not all of these recommendations are being put into practice. Some are being ignored, rejected or not implemented for decades.

Russia is ready for mutually advantageous co-operation with the EU Member States in all forums. This kind of co-operation would benefit considerably if our European colleagues were to refrain from mentoring and stop looking down on other partners and

creating an artificial classification of international human rights commitments. We are in favour of equitable and constructive dialogue with the European Union on human rights, fundamental freedoms and democratic development, which would be fully in keeping with the strategic partnership relationship evolving between Russia and the EU.