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**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1135th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

2 March 2017

In response to the report by the Head of the OSCE Mission to Montenegro

Mr. Chairperson,

We have listened carefully to the first report to the Permanent Council by the Head of the OSCE Mission to Montenegro, Ms. Maryse Daviet. A brief analysis of the current situation and information on the field presence's main areas of work were presented.

We acknowledge the Mission's role in supporting the institutional and legal development of the Montenegrin State. At the same time, the recent development of the situation in the country highlights the need to continue supporting the authorities in addressing the remaining challenges in strengthening the parliamentary system, the independence of the judiciary and investigations, and media pluralism. Further support is required in solving the problems of refugees and internally displaced persons, including in co-operation with OSCE field operations in neighbouring Balkan States.

We are grateful to the Mission for the inclusion in the written report of specific indicators of the effectiveness of law enforcement agencies in Montenegro. We are confident that the results of their work serve as clear evidence of the relevance and effectiveness of the many years of expert and methodological assistance provided by the OSCE field presence to the Montenegrin police. We see the value in continuing to provide assistance to the Montenegrin authorities in countering organized crime, drug trafficking, terrorism, trafficking in human beings and corruption, which are threats common to the Balkans, including by encouraging the law enforcement agencies of the States of the region to join their efforts in this area.

We think it is justified that the Mission wants to concentrate on programmes that are fewer in number but more ambitious. Undoubtedly, the possibilities for external assistance from the OSCE are far from boundless, and it should be as targeted as possible. We will be ready to discuss the relevant proposals within the next cycle of budget discussions.

We trust that in the face of the continuing deep divisions in Montenegrin society, the Mission's activities will be oriented towards the implementation of a unifying agenda. The

field presence's mandate is limited to helping the Montenegrin Government fulfil its OSCE commitments, and its potential cannot be used to help achieve the narrow interests of individual Montenegrin political forces concerning accession to the European Union and NATO.

In conclusion, I should like to once again thank Ms. Daviet for her efforts, and to wish her and the whole team further success.

Thank you for your attention.