

PC.DEL/1713/17
18 December 2017

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1169th (SPECIAL) MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

18 December 2017

**In response to the statement by the
European Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and
Enlargement Negotiations, H.E. Johannes Hahn**

Mr. Chairperson,
Commissioner Hahn,

We listened to your statement with interest. We note that inviting representatives of European and Eurasian integration associations to Permanent Council meetings is becoming a regular practice. On 19 October, Mr. T. S. Sargsyan, Chairman of the Board of the Eurasian Economic Commission, addressed this forum; today, we are holding discussions with you, the European Commissioner for Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations. We take it, of course, that this policy will continue to be structured in a balanced way, allowing the OSCE participating States to become conversant with the full spectrum of opinions.

We have observed some adjustment in the line taken by the European Commission on the “eastern policy”, in favour of a more pragmatic agenda with goal-setting aimed at the broadest possible consensus. This is encouraging. We expect that the Eastern Partnership will ultimately be oriented towards supporting unifying, integrative processes on the continent, and will promote the construction of a unified space from Lisbon to Vladivostok.

In the past, ill-conceived actions have already provoked conflicts within the countries involved in this Brussels initiative. This should not happen again. The one simple necessity is to avoid imposing an artificial choice on these countries between “with the European Union or with Russia”. Otherwise a rise in internal conflicts is inevitable, leading to an escalation with dire consequences both for the country itself and for its neighbours.

Commissioner Hahn,

We are all living in a time of global connectivity, in which the boundaries between countries for the movement of capital are being eliminated and conditions for cross-border co-operation are being established. The establishment of integration associations is becoming a logical step in stimulating member countries’ economic growth through the creation of

single markets with universal regulations for their operation. This can be said to be an example of flexibility and adaptability to the new situation of a fast-developing global economy.

The idea of holding dialogue and developing collaboration between various integration and co-operation structures is increasingly relevant. With its broad membership and instruments, the OSCE could play a liaison role here.

We believe that given our shared aspirations, it will be easy to see that we have many goals in common. Modernization on the basis of best practices is one of these. We should simply consider the updated agenda as an area for applying joint efforts, steering clear of attempts to “privatize” it.

Unfortunately, not all aspects of the development of the Eastern Partnership policy are on the right track in our view. We see signs that its focus is shifting away from general humanitarian matters towards the implementation of competitive (above all, Russian) infrastructure projects, including in the areas of energy and transport. Even more striking is the increasingly apparent drift of the Eastern Partnership in the direction of overall European Union (EU) policy in the area of security and defence, which has the direct effect of creating further potential for confrontation on our shared borders.

We are convinced that the peaceful and successful development of Europe requires refraining from a rudimentary policy of one-sided illegal sanctions, and from attempts to construct areas of influence on its borders in the name of “exporting stability” and “assisting with the development of democracy”. We can achieve a positive result only through a sincere effort aimed at taking one another’s interests into consideration.

Examples of this are in evidence. The General Directorate that you head is running programmes on co-operation on the Russia-EU borders. Not only do these create a platform for implementing various important infrastructure projects, but they also help to strengthen relations and build trust between citizens, business communities and the authorities in the border regions between Russia and several EU countries. The collaboration experience acquired here could also be useful in other areas of co-operation with the EU.

Thank you for your attention.