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**STATEMENT BY MR. ANVAR AZIMOV,  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE  
RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE  
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

13 April 2011

**In response to the statement by the President of Lithuania,  
Ms. Dalia Grzbauskaitė**

Mr. Chairperson,

We are extremely grateful to you for taking the opportunity, in spite of your heavy workload, to address this meeting of the Permanent Council in person and to give a review of the first 100 days of the Lithuanian Chairmanship of the OSCE and of its future plans. It should be noted that much of what has been said coincides with the Russian approach. I should like to take advantage of your presence to make a few observations that, in our opinion, could help in furthering the priorities of the Lithuanian Chairmanship set forth at the beginning of the year and ensuring the success of the Ministerial Council meeting in Vilnius.

Recent events within our Organization once again demonstrate the importance of maintaining an atmosphere of confidence and mutual understanding among OSCE participating States. As the outcome of the Summit in Astana showed, we managed last year to make serious progress in this direction. It is vital to treat the Astana legacy with the utmost caution, to do everything possible to maintain the potential achieved for building confidence and not to allow it to be undermined to pander to current political interests. We need to look forward not backwards. A move towards confrontation and attempts to isolate individual countries and to impose opinions and “recipes” on them do not produce anything good. This is hardly the way for us ever to make progress in carrying out the important tasks set before the OSCE by the leaders of our countries in the Astana Declaration.

We are counting on the Lithuanian Chairmanship to “navigate all reefs” in this regard and dock the “OSCE ship” in Ireland. Success can be guaranteed by allowing for the interests of all participating States, by taking the most balanced and open approach possible and by building consensus, which has always been the cornerstone of the OSCE.

As you know, the commemorative declaration adopted by the Heads of State or Government at the Astana Summit approved the strategic aim of creating a common and indivisible security community free of dividing lines, conflicts, spheres of influence and zones with different levels of security. It is in our common interests for the Lithuanian

Chairmanship to culminate in the adoption of pivotal measures that will really strengthen pan-European security. We are hoping for serious progress in arms control and confidence- and security-building measures.

We agree with the Chairmanship's position regarding "small but effective steps" towards the settlement of conflicts throughout the entire OSCE area. We believe that our joint efforts should be aimed at achieving lasting peace through direct negotiations in the agreed formats between the parties to the conflicts themselves.

We also agree with the greater attention being paid by Vilnius to countering new threats and challenges, particularly the fight against terrorism and organized crime, trafficking in human beings and illicit arms and drug trafficking. Like Lithuania, Russia regards the growth in drug trafficking, especially from the territory of Afghanistan, as one of the most dangerous threats to security in the OSCE region. It can be thwarted only through the collective efforts of all participating States. It is for this very reason that Russia, together with the United States of America, Turkey and a number of other States, last year proposed a draft OSCE anti-drug concept, which we are confident will be adopted this year. This will represent an important contribution by the Lithuanian Chairmanship to the fight against cross-border threats.

Global economic processes have produced an unprecedented increase in cross-border transport services. The most important task is to ensure transport security in the light of terrorist threats and environmental and technological risks. We are confident that the OSCE, which is a very large regional organization with a comprehensive mandate, can play an appreciable role in this process.

We believe that energy security should also remain on the OSCE agenda, particularly in the context of updating the existing legal basis for energy co-operation. We look forward to an active exchange of opinions on the draft Convention on Ensuring International Energy Security presented by Russia.

As for the humanitarian dimension of our Organization's activities, we are counting on the assistance of the Lithuanian Chairmanship in "resurrecting" the undeservedly forgotten OSCE commitments regarding freedom of movement and the liberalization of visa regimes.

There is a particular need these days for respectful relations with representatives of different nationalities and confessions so as to strengthen inter-ethnic harmony and tolerance. The resolution of this task depends to a large extent on active efforts by authorities to preserve the educational, cultural and information space for members of national minorities. We trust that the Chairmanship will give due attention to observance of the OSCE commitments in this field.

Madam President,

Russia firmly believes that one of the most important ways in which the effectiveness of the OSCE can be improved is by providing a solid legal basis for its activities, which is contingent on the adoption of a corresponding constituent document. We trust that the Lithuanian Chairmanship will do its bit to accomplish this clearly overdue task.

In conclusion I should like to assure you that Russia is sincerely interested in the success of the Lithuanian Chairmanship and is ready to provide it with all of the help it can.

Thank you for your attention.