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Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. ANDREY RUDENKO,
DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1072nd MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

22 October 2015

Regarding the violation of the rights of Russian journalists in Estonia

Mr. Chairperson,

We should like to express our indignation at the latest violation of the rights of Russian journalists, this time in Estonia.

On 15 October, a film crew from the All-Russia State Television and Radio Broadcasting Company (VGTRK), which had been making a programme on the demonstration in Tallinn demanding stricter border control, was detained at the Koidula border crossing.

The journalists were searched thoroughly and documents, telephones and professional equipment taken from them. They were held for five hours before being allowed to leave. The border guards explained their action by stating that they were apparently waiting for a response from Finland and Lithuania as to the basis for issuance of the visas to the Russian journalists and confirmation that they were not counterfeit. Moreover, the VGTRK crew were asked to explain in writing exactly what they were doing in Estonia.

The politically motivated obstruction of the activities of Russian journalists and gross violations of their rights have become increasingly common in the OSCE area. Moreover, the majority of incidents occur on the territory of the European Union, which claims to be the main defender of freedom of expression and the media. At the same time, there has been no proper reaction, notably in the Permanent Council.

We believe that the actions by Tallinn and by a number of other European States that hinder the activities of Russian journalists represent a gross violation of the OSCE commitments to freedom of access to information and freedom of movement. At the same time, we keep on hearing invocations from the European Union regarding the importance and priority of freedom of the media and of protecting and defending the rights of journalists. Evidently this does not apply to the members of the European Union themselves.

We urge the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media to make a public assessment of this incident in line with her mandate.

Thank you for your attention.