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**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,  
AT THE 1085th SPECIAL MEETING OF THE  
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

14 January 2016

**In response to the statement by the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office,  
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany, Mr. Frank-Walter Steinmeier**

Minister,

At the outset, allow me to offer my sincere condolences in connection with the deaths of your country's citizens as a result of the brutal terrorist act in Istanbul. We offer our expressions of sympathy to the people of Turkey, and we wish all those injured a speedy recovery.

Unfortunately, the beginning of 2016 has reinforced the worrying tendency towards growing transnational threats. The citizens of our countries are more and more frequently falling victim to international terrorism, organized crime and violent extremism, including neo-Nazism and right-wing radicalism. Uncontrollable migration flows are becoming a common problem. The increased radicalization of the public is dangerous.

All of these challenges come on top of the ongoing European security crisis, which is the result of a build-up of acute problems that have gone unresolved for decades. These primarily relate to the unwillingness of many States to co-operate on an equal and mutually respectful footing based on the principles of indivisible security. Instead, the norms and principles of international law have been arbitrarily interpreted and selectively applied. The fundamental principles of the Helsinki Final Act have been violated, above all the principle of non-intervention in internal affairs. The events in Ukraine were the logical conclusion of those destructive tendencies.

We agree that despite the differences the OSCE can, as it did 40 years ago, make a constructive contribution to restoring trust and co-operation and to uniting States on the basis of common interests, including in combating new threats and challenges. As the Ministerial Council meeting in Belgrade demonstrated, if the political will is there, we can find compromises and arrive at common positions.

We trust that the Chairmanship will make an active contribution to the full implementation of the Minsk Package of Measures, endorsed by a United Nations Security

Council resolution. There is no Plan B. It is crucial to facilitate direct dialogue between the Government of Ukraine and Donetsk and Luhansk on all aspects of the settlement, including the political process, and to make full use of the potential of the Trilateral Contact Group and its working groups with the support of the Normandy format members. The language of confrontation spoken here and the calls to shift the burden of resolving the Ukrainian crisis onto the Russian Federation are nothing more than the latest attempt to misrepresent the essential achievements of the Minsk agreements. The price of such approaches is a delay in the settlement process. The OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine is called upon to play an important stabilizing role – as an extremely effective and broad-based international presence in Donbas, it has earned a degree of trust from the parties and facilitated dialogue on the ground. We are in favour of continuing its work in strict accordance with its current mandate.

An important prerequisite for overcoming the current crisis is the development of dialogue, above all in the OSCE forum. We support the German Chairmanship's plans to continue discussion on current European security issues and on increasing the effectiveness of the OSCE, including by strengthening its legal status and enhancing its capacity to respond to various security threats.

The most recent events in Europe and the Mediterranean have shown the importance of paying more attention to transnational challenges, above all threats arising from the so-called Islamic State. Combating terrorism, radicalization and extremism should remain on the OSCE's agenda, as should combating the illicit drugs trade.

The OSCE's efforts to facilitate the resolution of frozen conflicts must take a status neutral line, in strict compliance with the consensus principle, taking into account the positions of all parties to a conflict and within the frameworks of agreed negotiating formats.

We agree that issues of sustainable economic connectivity are relevant to the economic and environmental dimension agenda. Harmonization and linking of integration processes in eastern and western Europe are called on to reduce the potential for conflict on the continent and to promote the establishment of a single economic and humanitarian area from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

The human dimension should be depoliticized and purged of double standards, above all within the framework of the Warsaw meeting. The priorities include protecting the rights of national minorities and the abolition of statelessness, combating ethnic and religious intolerance, including towards Christians, and the spread of extremist and Nazi ideology and the outlawing of attempts to falsify the history of the Second World War. Work should focus on areas such as ensuring the rights of children and the disabled, non-interference in private life and agreement on standardized rules for election observation. The full range of social, economic and cultural rights also requires equal attention. The OSCE is in a position to contribute to the response to the migration crisis.

While highlighting the important role of civil society including young people, we should not forget that the OSCE is nevertheless an intergovernmental organization, mandated to strengthen co-operation and security in relations among States.

In conclusion, Minister, I should like to make it clear that you can always count on the support of the Russian Federation in all initiatives aimed at restoring trust and promoting

co-operation in European affairs, strengthening the common and indivisible security of this continent. Allow me to wish you and your teams in Berlin and Vienna success in your future, far from straightforward assignment as the OSCE Chairmanship.

Thank you for your attention.