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

14 April 2011

On the 50th anniversary of Yuri Gagarin's space flight

We are grateful to our American colleagues for their statement at today's meeting of the Permanent Council commemorating the 50th anniversary of human space flight. In Russia we are justifiably proud of the fact that the first decisive step in the conquest of space was taken on 12 April 1961 by our compatriot Yuri Alekseyevich Gagarin. His flight was one of the most outstanding and momentous events in the twentieth century, opening a new chapter in the history of humanity. It is no coincidence that the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution on 7 April declaring 12 April as the International Day of Human Space Flight.

We completely agree with our American colleagues that it was Russia and the United States of America that presented the model for joint, mutually beneficial co-operation in the conquest of space, which effectively began 36 years ago when the Soviet spaceship Soyuz 19 docked with the American spaceship Apollo on 17 July 1975. This also established the practice of the joint exploration of space, which has been successfully continued with the International Space Station, where Russian-American crews work together regularly today. Like the Americans, we sincerely welcome the spirit of co-operation in space and are interested in continuing and consolidating it.

Thank you for your attention.