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

14 October 2011

**In response to the statement by the Deputy Prime Minister and
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Albania, Edmond Haxhinasto**

Mr. Chairperson,

We are pleased to welcome you, Deputy Prime Minister, to the Permanent Council meeting. We associate ourselves with the words of support expressed here for the efforts being made in Albania to normalize the internal political situation. It is important that the steps of the ruling coalition and the opposition towards reconciliation and constructive dialogue be mutual and remain within the framework of the law. Only in this way can agreements on the basis of compromise be achieved.

We regret that the protracted crisis in a country with which we enjoy friendly ties has led to a slowing down of key internal reform processes. We believe that the OSCE Presence in Albania must continue to provide comprehensive assistance to Tirana in solving the problems it is facing. It goes without saying that this must be done in strict accordance with the mission's mandate and the priorities of the host country.

The development of parliamentarism, the strengthening of civil society and electoral reform must remain at the centre of the mission's attention. In this context, we believe there is no justification for reducing financing in 2012, and still less for closing down the mission's field offices.

The regional problems touched upon in today's statement testify to the usefulness of the OSCE's assistance to the countries of the Western Balkans. Our Organization and its executive structures and field operations still have much to do here. This includes questions concerning the return of refugees and internally displaced persons to the places where they used to live and the restoration of their rights, and assistance in combating common global threats and challenges such as terrorism, organized crime, corruption, and trafficking in narcotic drugs and human beings. Regional efforts to resolve these cross-border issues still need to be bolstered.

I should now like to say a few words about the subject of Kosovo and Metohija. We are continuing to carefully monitor the situation in this province of Serbia, first and foremost

in the north of the territory, which was recently the scene of dramatic events. The indulgence of the limitless ambitions of the Kosovo Albanians, the deviation of the international presences in Kosovo from status neutrality, and the use of force are inevitably resulting in negative consequences for a Kosovo settlement. All this is detrimental to the dialogue that has been established between Belgrade and Pristina at great effort. The outbursts of violence in Kosovo could seriously destabilize the entire Western Balkan region.

We expect that the proper conclusions will be drawn from what has happened so as to avoid a fresh exacerbation of tension, a guarantee against which is the meticulous observance of United Nations Security Council resolution 1244.

We assume that during contacts between Belgrade and Brussels optimal parameters will be found to continue the negotiation process between Serbia and the Kosovo Albanian representatives.

Thank you for your attention.