

PC.DEL/769/18

21 June 2018

ENGLISH

Original: RUSSIAN

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. DMITRY BALAKIN,
DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1190th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

21 June 2018

**In response to the report by the
Head of the OSCE Programme Office in Astana**

Mr. Chairperson,

We thank Ambassador György Szabó for his detailed report.

We see that the Office adheres firmly to the principle of close co-ordination with the host country and endeavours to act flexibly while keeping to its mandated tasks. By making sure to take into account the Republic of Kazakhstan's long-term development priorities when setting its work plans, the Office can concentrate its efforts on areas that are really important for the country. We consider this to be the correct approach and it allows the Office to assist Kazakhstan in a meaningful manner in carrying out strategic reforms in the political, economic and social spheres.

We note the balanced nature of the Office's project portfolio. We are satisfied that the assistance programmes within the framework of the first dimension on traditional areas such as combating terrorism and radical extremism, countering the drug threat and trafficking in human beings, are supplemented by programmes addressing new challenges such as foreign terrorist fighters. Unfortunately, the relevance of this threat not only for Kazakhstan, but also for the entire OSCE area, is beyond doubt.

A number of interesting projects are being implemented within the framework of the second dimension. We know that Kazakhstan attaches particular importance to the economic and environmental basket. We would highlight trade facilitation, especially in border areas, the simplification of mechanisms for export-import operations, and combating corruption, money laundering and the financing of terrorism. We note the attention that the Office pays to various issues connected with migration, water resource management and the promotion of the green economy concept.

We note the Office's contacts with other OSCE field presences in the region, international organizations operating in Central Asia and embassies located in Astana. We welcome such co-operation and would like to take this opportunity to urge the Office to work

more actively with all the diplomatic representations accredited in the country representing the various OSCE participating States. We should also like to see a focus on closer co-operation with international structures of which Kazakhstan is a member, first and foremost the Eurasian Economic Community, the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO).

This year we mark the 20th anniversary of the OSCE presence in Kazakhstan (Permanent Council Decision No. 243 of 1998 on the establishment of the OSCE Centre in Almaty). This is a substantial length of time. Paying tribute to the fruitful activities of our Organization in the country, we should mention the impressive progress by Kazakhstan in implementing the OSCE principles and commitments in all three security dimensions. The country's success in various areas confirms its ability to resolve the tasks ahead of it independently.

We believe that under these new conditions the task of gradually transferring the Office's functions to the host country, as stipulated in paragraph 41 of the Charter for European Security, should take priority in the Office's work. We welcome the steps taken by the Office in this direction and call for this strategy to be reflected in the programmatic documents.

Mr. Chairperson,

Not only close and good-neighbourly relations link the Russian Federation and the Republic of Kazakhstan, but also a strategic alliance. The peoples of our countries and the fate of millions of our compatriots are closely intertwined, and together our States are building a Eurasian Economic Union and ensuring through joint efforts common security within the CSTO. We co-operate effectively in the SCO. As a close and trusted friend of Kazakhstan, Russia wishes it sustainable socio-economic progress and stable prosperity. We hope that the work of the OSCE Programme Office in Astana will also help to achieve these goals.

Thank you for your attention.