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**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1216th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

7 February 2019

On International Sami Day

Mr. Chairperson,

In the Russian Federation, the Sami are a small but no less important people in our multi-ethnic country.

A comprehensive schedule of events – the Concept for Sustainable Development of Small Indigenous Peoples in the North, Siberia and Far East of the Russian Federation – for implementation from 2016 to 2025 has been elaborated in Russia and is being successfully carried out.

The Sami live mostly in the Murmansk region. A number of targeted programmes have been instigated there since 2005 for the socio-economic and cultural development of the Sami. Measures are being taken to encourage and develop communal forms of management and self-employment, preserve the cultural heritage, traditions and customs, and raise the standard of living. Funds are allocated to improve the infrastructure of Sami communities. A number of benefits are provided, including in the fields of education and healthcare, to foster the ethnocultural development and social welfare of members of indigenous peoples.

In order to preserve the Sami language, literature and school textbooks on Sami themes are published, and television and radio programmes in the Sami language are broadcast.

Events are organized to preserve the traditions and customs of indigenous peoples in the North and to popularize indigenous national culture. National holidays, festivals, exhibitions, round tables, seminars and conferences are held every year. The main cultural events are National Sami Day on 6 February in the areas where the indigenous peoples traditionally live and the annual festival of Sami music in Olenegorsk.

Thank you for your attention.