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**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1239th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

5 September 2019

In connection with the International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances

Mr. Chairperson,

The problem of enforced disappearances has not lost any of its relevance either in the OSCE area or beyond.

We have drawn attention, on a number of occasions, to the fact that the authorities in the United States of America abduct people in other countries without informing the relevant countries of citizenship, and that they hinder the relatives of detained Russian citizens – and also representatives of Russian diplomatic missions – from gaining access to them.

The existence of Guantánamo prison is a glaring example of the double standards applied by the United States in the area of human rights. Scores of people continue to be held in custody there, most of them without charge and without their cases being brought to trial. Moreover, those responsible for the acts of torture and the enforced disappearances that occurred while the detainees were being transferred or subjected to secret detention have not even been prosecuted.

In connection with the current topic, we cannot but mention, too, that secret prisons of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) existed within the territory of several Member States of the European Union.

In particular, when reviewing, in 2017, the most recent regular report submitted by Lithuania, the United Nations Committee on Enforced Disappearances welcomed “the ongoing investigations into allegations of the State party’s involvement in the rendition and secret detention programmes” and also urged “the State party to complete the investigation into allegations of its involvement in the rendition and secret detention programmes within a reasonable time, that those responsible be held accountable, and that victims be duly recognized and provided with appropriate redress and reparation”.

A year later, in May 2018, the European Court of Human Rights ruled in the cases of *Abu Zubaydah v. Lithuania* and *Al Nashiri v. Romania* that both individuals had been transported onto the territory of the aforesaid States under the secret extraordinary rendition programme and that they had been subjected there to ill-treatment and arbitrary detention in CIA prisons.

Additionally, many cases involving the arbitrary detention of dissidents, journalists and human rights defenders in Ukraine have not been investigated to this day.

Thank you for your attention.