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**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1144th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

4 May 2017

On violations of human rights in the United States of America

Mr. Chairperson,

We should like once again to draw the Permanent Council's attention to the state of human rights in the United States of America and the trends in this situation during the first 100 days of the new administration. I emphasize that this is not only our analysis. Well-known human rights organizations are also drawing the same conclusions.

The OSCE has a large number of commitments on migration. These commitments are set out, in particular, in the documents adopted in Copenhagen (1990), Moscow (1991), Helsinki (1992), Porto (2002) and Maastricht (2003) and in many others. In spite of this, the United States is increasingly tightening up its policy on regulating the influx of migrants and refugees, including their length of stay in the country, the complex and lengthy verification procedure (which has to be repeated after a stay of 120 days) and the number of refugees admitted per year. Human rights defenders believe that this situation may forever close the door on the chance of saving thousands of refugees, including children. Furthermore, the closure of part of the United States border jeopardizes respect for the rights of indigenous peoples.

The situation regarding manifestations of national and religious intolerance has deteriorated noticeably. According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, more than 2,500 cases of intolerance towards Muslims were recorded in the country between 2001 and 2015; the number of such incidents increased by 67 per cent last year. According to information provided by non-governmental organizations, during the last three months the number of attacks on mosques has doubled and the frequency of cases of harassment of Muslims and Jews has increased considerably. The OSCE participating States have adopted commitments on the unequivocal condemnation of manifestations of racial or religious intolerance, as set out in countless OSCE documents, including Helsinki (1992), Budapest (1994) and Istanbul (1999).

The notorious prison at Guantánamo Bay has still not been closed. There, the United States authorities have tortured citizens of various countries who are suspected of

terrorism and deprived them of their right to a fair trial. The practice of the indefinite extrajudicial detention of prisoners, the extradition of detainees in circumvention of established procedures, the forcible and clandestine transfer of detainees to secret prisons on the territory of third countries, further unlawful holding in custody, interrogations involving the use of torture and other forms of inhuman or degrading treatment is disturbing. The Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, Mr. Nils Muižnieks, has also spoken of the inadmissibility of using torture when interrogating persons suspected of terrorism.

The use by the United States of the principle of extraterritoriality to avoid compliance with the relevant international obligations and the application of national legislation on the inadmissibility of torture is unacceptable. We expect a thorough and serious investigation by the United States and the European Union countries into the secret prisons operated by the Central Intelligence Agency.

We have repeatedly expressed our concern at Permanent Council meetings regarding the actions of the United States police force, whose members often overstep their authority, especially with regard to the African-American population, and in doing so do not suffer any serious penalties.

According to human rights defenders, the police throughout the territory of the United States use firearms without sufficient justification, beat up people who are being arrested, use methods that cause them to suffocate and often apply unreasonably harsh measures of physical pressure, while at the same time there is no evidence so far of serious attempts by the authorities and the Department of Justice to restrain and punish the guilty parties. Numerous administrative tricks prevent the police officers involved from being brought to justice, and this impunity allows them to continue their violence. The American public is concerned that the authorities' plans to strengthen the powers of the law enforcement agencies may exacerbate the situation and reduce citizens' protection from police brutality to a minimum.

The unresolved problem of offences in the field of criminal justice is also a cause for concern. These are abuses leading to a massive increase in the number of prisoners, disproportionate sentences, the use of prolonged detention in solitary confinement and the unwillingness of the authorities to deal with complex cases such as that of Leonard Peltier, who was sentenced to 40 years' imprisonment as a result of a substandard trial.

We believe that such phenomena require an appropriate assessment and response from the OSCE and its key human rights institutions.

Thank you for your attention.