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**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1117th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

3 November 2016

**Regarding the ongoing police violence in the
United States of America**

Mr. Chairperson,

Recently, on 8 September 2016, the distinguished Permanent Representative of the United States of America provided information here on the investigation conducted by the US Department of Justice into the activities of the police department of the city of Baltimore. It was occasioned by the headline-making murder of Mr. Freddie Gray by police officers from that city. The results gave serious grounds for concluding that the actions of the Baltimore police violate the US Constitution and federal anti-discrimination laws.

Moreover, the continuing wave of violence in the United States of America demonstrates that the situation in Baltimore is not unique. On 9 September, for example, police officers fatally shot 56-year-old Gregory Frazier in Pompano Beach. The police had been called out to deal with a family dispute, which had already been resolved by the time they arrived, a fact they completely ignored. They shot Mr. Frazier, who at the time was eating in the yard of his home, five times. The law enforcement officers handcuffed the wounded man, and only then were attempts made to give him medical treatment. He died at the scene.

The police shot the unarmed Terence Crutcher in Tulsa on 16 September and Keith Lamont Scott in Charlotte on 20 September. All three of the victims were African Americans.

The last-named killing in Charlotte provoked riots in which people were injured. Units of the National Guard had to be called in and a state of emergency declared. It would seem that the forceful suppression of civil protests against racial discrimination and the impunity of the police is already becoming a tradition.

In New York on 18 October a police sergeant shot the mentally disturbed 66-year-old black pensioner Deborah Danner.

A few days ago in Milwaukee, Dominique Heaggan-Brown, who had shot the 23-year-old African American Sylville Smith in August, was dismissed from the police force. This killing had also provoked mass rioting and clashes. And yet Heaggan-Brown was dismissed not for killing the young man but for sexual offences.

The latest series of killings of black US citizens by law enforcement officers inevitably brings to mind the promise to look into arbitrary police violence given by the current US administration in 2014 after the wave of civil protests in Ferguson. Over the past two years riots have flared up regularly in other cities (Baltimore, Charlotte, New York, Cleveland, Baton Rouge, St. Louis and others) after unarmed black people had been killed by law enforcement offices. We have spoken about this on numerous occasions at meetings of the Permanent Council.

The statistics on that score speak volumes. In fact, the US authorities have attempted under various pretexts to exclude them from general crime statistics. By his own admission, even James Comey, Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, apparently does not have them. As recently as October he stated at hearings in the US House of Representatives that he could not say how many people had been killed by the police the previous month or year.

At all events, according to the US media, 991 citizens were killed by the police in 2015 and this year there have already been 754 cases. The non-governmental organization Black Lives Matter states that 234 of them were black. It is interesting to note that more than two thirds of them were unarmed when they were killed. The same organization states that in 97 per cent of the cases the police were not held accountable.

We trust that our US colleagues will continue to inform the Permanent Council about the investigation of these cases. We have suggested more than once that the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights be involved in the analysis of the problem of police brutality in the United States of America and in helping to instruct law enforcement bodies on basic human rights standards. We believe that this OSCE executive structure would be extremely useful in this situation. Or do our US colleagues consider that the Office should work only “to the east of Vienna”?

Thank you for your attention.