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PC.DEL/1311/20  
9 October 2020

ENGLISH  
Original: RUSSIAN

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,  
AT THE 1284th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

8 October 2020

**On the World Day Against the Death Penalty**

Mr. Chairperson,

The use of the death penalty was officially suspended for the first time in Russian history in 1598. This form of punishment was then abolished a number of times, for example, in 1753. It is well known that most European countries were not even contemplating this at that time.

In the modern era, upon joining the Council of Europe, Russia made a commitment in 1996 not to apply the death penalty. It honoured this commitment by establishing a comprehensive moratorium on this type of punishment in 1999. Since then – that is, for 19 years – Russian courts have never sentenced anyone to death. The Criminal Code stipulates alternative forms of punishment, ranging from lengthy prison sentences to life imprisonment.

We believe that, as a result of the moratorium, the human right not to be subjected to the death penalty is firmly guaranteed in our country. A constitutional and legal framework has emerged, under which there is an irreversible process aimed at abolishing the death penalty, with account taken of Russia's international commitments. In 2009, the Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation confirmed this understanding.

The Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation is considering the legislative abolition of the death penalty and accession to the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

While the death penalty is not applied in Russia, this does not mean that we support imposing the legislative abolition of the death penalty on other countries. In this case, it is important to bear in mind the cultural, historical, legal and other contexts of States' development.

Thank you for your attention.