

PC.DEL/703/16

27 May 2016

ENGLISH

Original: RUSSIAN

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1101st MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

26 May 2016

**In response to the address by the Chair of the Committee of Ministers of
the Council of Europe, Ms. Marina Kaljurand**

Mr. Chairperson,
Madam Minister,

We welcome you to the Permanent Council meeting. We have listened with interest to the Estonian Chairmanship's approaches to the activities of the Council of Europe and its collaboration with the OSCE. We support the focus placed on dialogue and co-operation.

As we all know, in May 2005, the OSCE and the Council of Europe identified four priority areas of co-operation: the fight against terrorism, combating trafficking in human beings, the protection of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities and promoting tolerance and non-discrimination. Although more than ten years have elapsed since then, there is no doubt as to the relevance of the selected themes given the current situation in Europe. It is important that the activities of these two pan-European organizations are closely co-ordinated so as to avoid duplication of effort and unnecessary dissipation of resources.

The unifying potential of the Council of Europe is especially called for today, first and foremost, its activities in the human rights sphere, including the protection of national minorities and the eradication of the shameful phenomenon of mass statelessness, countering extremism, aggressive nationalism and racial and religious intolerance, as well as persistent attempts to falsify history up to the point of rehabilitating Nazism. We should not close our eyes to the human rights violations in Ukraine either. We trust that both the Council of Europe and the OSCE will continue to urge the authorities in Kyiv to bring to justice those guilty of the mass burning of people in Odessa in May 2014.

It is only through depoliticized work without double standards or selective approaches and through a focus on the development of intercultural dialogue and the preservation of Europe's cultural identity that the efforts to draw up a unifying agenda for all the States of our region can be given the necessary impetus. We hope that Estonia will also include these questions among its priorities and will help to strengthen the role of the Council of Europe as the leading pan-European forum for sectoral co-operation in the humanitarian sphere. We

take the position that the principles which the Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe and the OSCE should be guided by are one and the same – a focus on solving real problems and a genuine willingness to find consensus-based solutions to complex issues.

This spring Russia celebrated a landmark date – 20 years ago, our country became a full member of the Council of Europe. We remain committed to the motto of the Russian Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in 2006: “Towards a united Europe without dividing lines”. We firmly believe that by pooling the efforts of the OSCE and the Council of Europe it will be possible to make a real contribution to the creation of a common economic and humanitarian space in Europe as an indispensable condition for the elimination of dividing lines.

In conclusion, I should like to wish the Estonian Chairmanship every success.

Thank you for your attention.