

PC.DEL/1413/16  
14 October 2016

ENGLISH  
Original: RUSSIAN

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,  
AT THE 1115th MEETING OF THE  
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

13 October 2016

**On the outcome of the  
OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting in Warsaw**

Mr. Chairperson,

We thank the Director of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) Mr. Michael Link for his detailed account.

The Meeting was conducted to some extent under the shadow of the anniversary of the adoption and entry into force of two international human rights covenants. On the one hand, the discussion highlighted the indivisibility and interrelationship between all categories of human rights and the need for a balanced approach to them. On the other hand, it once again demonstrated the failure of certain States in their self-proclaimed role as “universal advocates” of human rights while refusing even to ratify these treaties or withdraw their reservations to them.

This year again a number of States have been attempting to attack individual States that are independently pursuing their own policies, including in the area of the protection of human rights. We urge the United States of America and members of the European Union finally to demonstrate a willingness to talk and co-operate in the human dimension and to refrain from such attacks. An unconstructive approach of this nature discredits the very idea of protecting human rights.

We have frequently called on our Western colleagues to refrain from mentoring and to participate in constructive dialogue, something that is lacking today in the OSCE, but we do not see any political will by them to do so.

This position is clearly connected with the continuing attempts to impose their priorities by force and to interfere in the internal affairs of sovereign States. The result of this practice is vividly demonstrated by the extremely difficult crisis within Ukraine.

Against this background, the decision by the people of Crimea in the referendum of March 2014 to reunite with Russia is completely defensible. The collective punishment of the

Crimean people for their free choice by the United States, the European Union and Ukraine is cynical and contravenes international law. We are pleased that the Warsaw meeting format allowed representatives of Crimean society to provide States and civil society with objective information about the state of affairs on the peninsula.

The OSCE is confronted by serious tasks today: dealing with the problem of migration, combating manifestations of racism, ultranationalism and neo-Nazism, defending the rights of children, countering intolerance towards Christians and Muslims, and protecting national minorities and journalists. Here, too, we need to face up to these challenges rather than engaging in empty politicizing rhetoric.

For example, we have not yet heard a convincing explanation from the European Union as to how it proposes to deal with the migration problem, particularly given the exploitation of migratory flows by terrorist organizations as a means of penetrating the European continent. Nor should we forget that the origin of the difficult migration situation in Europe is to be found in the irresponsible actions and politics of the United States and its allies aimed at overthrowing undesirable governments in the countries of the Middle East and North Africa. In that connection we consider it absolutely inappropriate to suggest the burden and responsibility for the consequences of these steps should be shared by all.

It was repeatedly pointed out in Warsaw that the instruction at the OSCE Ministerial Council meeting in Basel to adopt declarations on combating intolerance and discrimination against Christians and Muslims has not yet been followed up. We fail to understand the position of those countries that attempt for spurious reasons to avoid this.

We attach equal importance to the adoption at the OSCE Ministerial Council meeting in Hamburg of decisions on banning discrimination in sport, particularly against persons with disabilities, and on freedom of expression and free and pluralistic media in the OSCE area.

The discussion of the question of tolerance at the Meeting demonstrated the importance of countering efforts to falsify the history of the Second World War. We consider it important to make concerted efforts to put a stop to attempts to venerate Nazism and its supporters, to marches by veterans of the Waffen-SS, to the glorification of criminal groups like the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists or the Ukrainian Insurgent Army, and to manifestations of neo-Nazism, radical nationalism and other aggressive ideologies. This is particularly relevant in the year of the 70th anniversary of the sentencing at the Nuremberg Tribunal.

The question of bringing the ODIHR's election observation methodology into line with professional and objective principles and the drafting of a document in this regard by agreement of all participating States continues to be of relevance.

I should like to say a few words about the modalities of the meeting in Warsaw. By no means all of the ODIHR's innovations are worthy of support. We urge the Office to refrain from allowing invited experts to speak without restriction. All of the necessary materials can be distributed beforehand. By contrast, there should be sufficient time for delegations to exchange opinions.

We do not share the optimism of some colleagues who speak of the "success and outstanding organization" of the Meeting. This does not tally at all with the fact that two

government delegations were forced to leave. It is unacceptable for emissaries of terrorist organizations or persons who have committed criminal offences to take part in OSCE events. In our opinion there has long been a need to optimize the Human Dimension Implementation Meetings, including a reduction in their duration and other aspects, regulation of the participation in them by non-governmental structures and revision of Permanent Council Decision No. 476.

We are willing to co-operate constructively in the human dimension. The main task in our opinion is to change the Implementation Meeting from being a platform for settling political scores into a forum for equal and mutually respectful dialogue.

Thank you for your attention.