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**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1165th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

23 November 2017

On the OSCE's migration-related activities

Mr. Chairperson,
Mr. Secretary General,
Mr. Filippo Lombardi,

We have listened with interest to your statements on the pressing issue of migration.

We agree that the OSCE and its Parliamentary Assembly need to pay more attention to this topic, which is an essential component of the discussion of the causes and consequences of the unprecedented flow of migrants into Europe and the increase in terrorist attacks on the continent. The seriousness of the migration problem was also mentioned at the recent OSCE Mediterranean Conference in Palermo. We are grateful to our Italian colleagues for the excellent organization of that forum.

We share the view that the realities unfolding in Europe force us to take a sober look at the migration problems and the root causes for their emergence. Indeed, we need to make an honest assessment of the acts that have destabilized the situation in many countries of the Middle East and North Africa. The responsibility for resolving the serious problems that have arisen, which has been talked about so much in recent years, should lie with those who have committed these errors. I think many States that are forced to bear the burden of the responsibility of others are in agreement with us on this matter.

In that connection, we should not forget the imperative need for a political settlement in the migrants' and refugees' countries of origin and the restoration of the socio-economic infrastructure there. No less important is the question of the integration of migrants and refugees in the host States. The OSCE Secretary General has also drawn particular attention to this in today's report.

Unfortunately, we have not seen any noticeable progress to date here in the European Union, which has been unable to establish an effective system for the reception and dispersal of migrants, among whom there are a considerable number of women and children. The situation of unaccompanied children is of particular concern. According to Interpol,

thousands and thousands of such children go missing as soon as they are registered upon arrival in EU countries. And how many of them are not even registered?

We share the Secretary General's concern regarding the increase in the number of crimes connected with trafficking in human beings in the context of migration flows. We support the efforts of the OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, Ms. Madina Jarbussynova, and her Office in this area.

We are in agreement with Mr. Filippo Lombardi regarding the importance of developing a long-term migration policy, with the aim, among other things, of preventing an uncontrolled and illegal flow of migrants. We have to look far beyond the boundaries of our region to solve this problem. As you are aware, the work currently being carried out under the auspices of the United Nations to prepare the two Global Compacts – on refugees and migration – is focused on this. As the major regional platform, the OSCE can make its contribution to these efforts.

We support the call for increased co-operation in this area so as to establish a consolidated position. The Russian Federation is ready to play a constructive role in that process.

Thank you for your attention.