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**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1157th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

28 September 2017

On violations of freedom of the media in Moldova

Mr. Chairperson,

On 26 September 2017, a correspondent of the Russian newspaper *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, Darya Aslamova, was detained at the airport in the city of Chişinău. Moreover, she was detained by persons armed with automatic weapons, as if the journalist could be a threat.

The Moldovan border police claimed that she allegedly could not substantiate the purpose of her visit, although Ms. Aslamova reported that she was going for an interview with the country's President Igor Dodon and had a written invitation from the Head of State. Despite this, representatives of the border service forcibly removed the correspondent from the airport building and put her on a flight to Bucharest.

The association of Russian-language journalists of the Republic of Moldova has already expressed concern over the incident. Moreover, according to the media, even President Dodon himself expressed outrage at the actions of the security forces.

Unfortunately, this is far from an isolated case. Earlier this year, the Moldovan authorities had repeatedly prohibited the entry of Russian journalists into the country. For example, on 31 August, the editor-in-chief of the *Argumenty i fakty* newspaper, Igor Chernyak, was refused entry. In May 2017, a journalist of the *Rossiyskie Vesti* newspaper, Dmitriy Yermolayev, was not allowed to enter Moldova. Prior to this, the same measure was applied to RIA Novosti correspondent Timur Khursandov, Perviy kanal employees Ilya Kostin and Dmitriy Bedarev, VGTRK journalist Alexander Balitskiy, Lifenews correspondent Kirill Olkov, as well as representatives of the NTV and REN-TV television channels and of several other Russian media.

The hostile actions of the Moldovan authorities against Russian journalists performing their work violate the Moldovan Government's commitments to the OSCE on freedom of expression and the media.

We call upon the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Harlem Désir, to give an appropriate assessment of the discriminatory policies of individual Moldovan authorities against journalists.

Thank you for your attention.