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**STATEMENT BY MR. ANDREY RUDENKO,  
DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE  
RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 909th MEETING OF THE  
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

26 April 2012

**Regarding assistance by the OSCE in organizing the  
voting process for residents of Kosovo in the presidential and  
parliamentary elections in Serbia**

Mr. Chairperson,

We are carefully following the efforts of the Chairmanship, the OSCE Secretariat and the OSCE Mission in Kosovo in connection with the readiness to provide Belgrade with technical assistance in organizing the voting process for residents of the territory in the parliamentary and presidential elections in Serbia. We hope that in the end a solution that satisfies all the parties will be found.

We understand the position taken by Belgrade to the effect that the elections must be organized in accordance with the Constitution of Serbia and Serbian election laws.

The Russian position on the Kosovo problem remains unchanged. A long-term solution of that problem is possible only through negotiations between the parties concerned on the basis of United Nations Security Council resolution 1244, which remains fully in force.

We know that in the run-up to the Serbian parliamentary and presidential elections on 6 May there will be an increase in tension in Kosovo. What is now important is not to allow this to provoke yet another outburst of violence in the territory or to result in inter-ethnic clashes. Against this background, the militant voices being heard from Pristina regarding a readiness to use all available levers, including those involving the use of force, to disrupt the Serbian municipal elections are a cause for concern.

The entire burden of responsibility for maintaining stability and ensuring the safety of all the inhabitants of the territory, in the context of the forthcoming elections as well, rests with the international missions in Kosovo. We urge them to adhere strictly to their mandates, to act in a balanced and impartial manner, and to meticulously observe the principle of status neutrality.

Thank you for your attention.