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United States Mission to the OSCE

Reply to Russia on Reports of Arrests and Murders of Gay Men by the Chechen Government

As delivered by Chargé d'Affaires, a.i. Kate M. Byrnes
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
April 6, 2017

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

We have taken note of the Russian Federation's response to our statement. I'd say this is not the first time that the Russian Federation has responded to a genuine expression of concern about a certain situation or development in Russia by attacking those raising the issue in the Permanent Council. As we've seen today, as well as in other meetings, Russia responds typically through a combination of denying the situation exists, telling us to get our facts straight, or attempting to deflect attention from the situation by raising other issues.

I would just like to clarify and reiterate that LGBTI rights are human rights, that these are troubling allegations that merit a full investigation, and that we welcome the commitment made by our distinguished colleague that Russia will investigate fully these incidents.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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