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**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,  
AT THE 1101st MEETING OF THE  
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

26 May 2016

**In response to the reply by the European Union on violations of the rights  
of migrant children in the European Union**

Mr. Chairperson,

We thank our colleagues for their information and support the commitment to dialogue on this important issue. While we note the measures undertaken by the European Union (EU) authorities in this area, the situation of migrant children in EU countries remains critical.

We should like to draw attention to a recent article in the magazine *Politico* under the headline “Europe’s quiet crisis: ‘missing’ migrant children”, the result of a journalistic investigation. It stated that according to intelligence received from the governments of EU countries, the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), there are 10,000 missing children – by a conservative estimate. A representative of INTERPOL’s Human Trafficking and Child Exploitation Unit claims that national authorities in some EU countries are deliberately failing to report information about missing migrant children to the INTERPOL database because they do not wish to lose money earmarked for their support. Moreover, according to the NGO Save the Children, many migrant children are registered in the statistics as adults.

In the words of Robert Crepinko, head of the recently established European Police Office (Europol) European Migrant Smuggling Centre, many missing migrant children are exploited by criminal gangs and work for construction or agricultural companies.

The journalists note that there is an absence of the necessary co-ordination both between the EU States and between the various departments within the States to ensure that migrant children are monitored and their rights observed. In many cases national authorities do not wish to take responsibility and “pass the buck”. This, I emphasize, is not our assessment.

In general, in spite of the measures enumerated by the EU’s distinguished representative, the situation of thousands of migrant children within the European Union

remains difficult. We continue to maintain the importance of making use the OSCE's resources to deal with this serious problem, in particular the potential of the OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings. The idea of the EU inviting the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights to monitor the situation and draft recommendations for the European Commission is also relevant. It might be worth discussing this subject at the forthcoming meeting of the Informal Working Group on Migration on 27 May 2016.

Thank you for your attention.