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**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,  
AT THE 1170th MEETING OF THE  
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

21 December 2017

**In response to the report by the Special Representatives of the  
Chairperson-in-Office on Youth and Security**

Mr. Chairperson,

We thank the Special Representatives for their presentations. We acknowledge the importance of work with young people, which is becoming essential in protecting the younger generation from terrorist and extremist ideas. We have to admit that terrorists are often defeating States in the fight for the hearts and minds of the most vulnerable sections of society, which also include young people. Indeed, the leaders of extremist organizations try to recruit followers and spread propaganda among young people in particular. This is primarily because young people are extremely prone to black and white thinking, intransigence and an unstable worldview, which can drive them into the ranks of extremists when targeted and in certain circumstances.

The crises that have shaken the economies of almost all countries in the world in recent years have also enabled the spread of radical views. Young people are also driven to violence by the lack of prospects for personal fulfilment, the loss of direction in life, and disappointments in education, employment and other areas.

In a number of countries, an information and ideological vacuum adds to these oblique factors. Consequently, educational institutions are becoming key allies of the State in combating terrorism and extremism. The education and training system must be oriented towards anchoring universal moral and humanitarian values, the principles of tolerance and non-violent behaviour, patriotic beliefs, attitudes of solidarity and partnership, and co-operation and mutual assistance in the thoughts and behaviour of the younger generation.

We note the work of the Austrian OSCE Chairmanship in the area of working with young people and implementing United Nations Security Council resolution 2250. However, some colleagues prefer to interpret this document as a call to promote extended participation of youth in a leadership role to counter violent extremism. We need to consider that the resolution has various nuances and is applicable in a specific context, namely in States where there are ongoing armed conflicts or post-conflict reconstruction. Apart from that, the

provision on the role of youth in countering extremism is not given primary importance here and has the status of a recommendation.

Giving powers to youth is interpreted in the United Nations as extending opportunities, which does not equate to participation on an equal footing in decision-making. Young people in the age group defined in the resolution, like the adult population as a whole, have sufficient opportunity to influence political and law-making processes through constitutionally established procedures such as participation in elections, political parties, voluntary associations and public discussions on laws.

We have reviewed the Decalogue resulting from the Youth Conference in Malaga on 25 and 26 May. We commend the aspiration of young people to participate more actively in promoting regional security, conflict resolution and strengthening peaceful coexistence in society. At the same time we must note that these are only the first steps that require adjustment and guidance from professionals.

In terms of the so-called extension of opportunities for young people to States and international organizations, including the OSCE, it would be a good idea to focus on ensuring decent education and employment provision and the exercise of social, economic and cultural rights. These are the effective preventive measures for ensuring social peace and stability.

Russia is carrying out proactive preventive work with the younger generation. In November 2014, President Vladimir Putin approved the “Strategy on combating extremism in the Russian Federation up to 2025”. This sets out a whole range of measures aimed at managing young people’s leisure time and their ability to resist antisocial behaviour. The potential of academic communities, voluntary and religious organizations, reputable clergy members, leaders of ethnic groups and local authorities is being harnessed to raise awareness among young people. The objective is to promote the pursuit of traditional peaceable religious values and principles and the establishment of a solid anti-terrorist outlook among young people. The leading role in combating terrorist ideology falls to the authorities carrying out State policy in the areas of education, culture, sport and the education of young people.

Thank you for your attention.