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**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1155th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

21 July 2017

**On the situation of sexual minorities in the Chechen Republic of the
Russian Federation**

Mr. Chairperson,

In the light of the statement by the distinguished representative of the European Union regarding the situation of sexual minorities in the Chechen Republic, we should like to state the following.

We have repeatedly provided clarification on this subject this year. In order to save time, we would suggest that our colleagues take another look at those explanations, especially given that we have heard nothing new on the crux of the matter. It is understandable that the Chechen Republic, whose socio-economic recovery has been proceeding at quite a rapid pace in recent years, cannot but attract close attention from the outside observer. Such sincere curiosity is always pleasant, especially if it is not politically motivated and is focused on positive things. Just for your information, we should like to remind you that in addition to the Chechen Republic Russia has a further 84 regions also worthy of attention.

As for the essence of the “concerns” raised, I would recall that the federal and regional law enforcement authorities, along with the institutions of the Commissioners for Human Rights, are continuing to verify the claims by *Novaya Gazeta* about the alleged crimes against members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community in this region. A special analytical team focusing on possible violations of the rights of inhabitants of the Republic belonging to the LGBT community operates within the investigative department of the Russian Investigative Committee for the Chechen Republic. The team’s mandate also includes monitoring reports in the media of possible violations of the rights and interests of this group of persons, with a view to ensuring a prompt response.

Despite all the measures taken, information on the alleged violation of the rights of members of the LGBT community, let alone on any crimes committed against them, has not been confirmed. In this connection, questions remain regarding the source of this kind of “information”. Many of those present here will remember that in April 2017 Russian LGBT activists filed a lawsuit against *Novaya Gazeta*, demanding that it prove its allegations. I

would also recall the comments by the leader of the Russian LGBT movement, Nikolai Alekseev, who in an interview in late May with the news agency Natsionalnaya Sluzhba Novostey (National News Service) said (I quote): “We have not yet seen one fact or heard one name of any persons actually persecuted in Chechnya.” The situation has not changed in the meantime.

Against this background, the latest fake news on this topic, and even with reference to the same source, cannot but leave us puzzled and asking further questions.

Thank you for your attention.