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**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1076th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

12 November 2015

**Regarding the presentation of the report by the Office for Democratic
Institutions and Human Rights on Guantánamo**

Mr. Chairperson,

We take note of the report by the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) on the human rights situation of detainees at Guantánamo. We intend to familiarize ourselves with this extensive document in greater detail at the earliest opportunity. At the same time, there is no evidence that the United States of America is open to co-operating with human rights mechanisms given that Washington continues to prevent the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Torture, Mr. Juan Mendez, and the ODIHR for that matter from visiting Guantánamo.

Combating torture and other inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment is currently one of the most pressing tasks. A large set of commitments for combating this horrendous phenomenon has been developed under international law and within the OSCE.

Unfortunately, these commitments are systematically violated in the OSCE region. The practice of arbitrary and indefinite detention of prisoners, the extradition of detainees in circumvention of the established procedures, the forcible and clandestine transfer of detainees to secret prisons on the territory of third countries and enhanced interrogation techniques involving the use of torture has still not been eradicated in the United States and a number of European Union Member States.

We have repeatedly drawn the Permanent Council's attention to the situation at Guantánamo, unlawfully opened on the sovereign territory of Cuba, and to the use of torture against prisoners. Despite the findings of the well-known United States Senate report, those guilty of using torture and other inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment and of aiding and abetting these crimes have still not faced serious punishment in the United States or a number of European Union countries. For example, there is the case of the Saudi citizen Shaker Aamer, who returned to London on 30 October 2015 after 13 years' imprisonment in Guantánamo without charge.

President Obama's promise to close this scandalous prison has still not been realized. As of October this year, there were 112 people in those torture chambers.

The existence of the special detention facility at Guantánamo contravenes fundamental human rights norms and standards. We once again call on the United States to fully implement its commitments and take immediate steps to prevent human rights violations at Guantánamo and close this prison. We also call on Washington to issue the complete Senate report, as so far only 528 of some 6,000 pages have been published. Our United States colleagues evidently still have something to hide. Furthermore, we urgently recommend that the United States of America withdraw the reservation made in 2005 to the Convention against Torture to the effect that this document does not apply to the actions of United States citizens abroad. This reservation means that the United States, which has the largest military presence in the world in other countries, demonstratively disregards the international ban on the use of torture.

Thank you for your attention.