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**STATEMENT BY MR. ANDREY KELIN,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1035th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

22 January 2015

On human rights violations

Mr. Chairperson,

We have taken note of our colleagues' concerns and will pass them on to the capital.

As far as the law on non-profit organizations is concerned, we have provided detailed explanations on several occasions on this subject.

It is true that following investigations, the Russian Ministry of Justice included the Public Commission to Protect the Legacy of Andrei Sakharov, a non-governmental organization (NGO), on 25 December 2014 in the list of organizations acting as foreign agents. You will find copious information on other non-profit organizations included in this list on the Ministry of Justice website. For example, the most recent decision on 20 January concerned four organizations from different regions of Russia. I should point out that there are 674,000 non-profit organizations registered in Russia, of which only 34 are currently on the list, representing less than 0.005 per cent of the total number of non-profit organizations in Russia. This figure speaks for itself.

I should like to emphasize that the decisions by the Ministry of Justice are taken in full compliance with Russian law, and all "foreign agents" have the right to appeal against the Ministry's decision in a court of law in the same way as all other cases.

As far as the Navalny brothers are concerned, I should like to recall that the decision of the Zamoskvorechye court refers strictly to a white-collar crime, in this case the embezzlement and laundering of more than 26.7 million roubles (around 1 million United States dollars at the current exchange rate) from the company Yves Rocher Vostok and a further 4.4 million roubles (roughly 150,000 dollars) from the Multifunctional Processing Company. Alexei Navalny was placed under provisional house arrest until the verdict of the court enters into force.

Counsel for the Navalny brothers has lodged an appeal. We believe that no one in this room would dispute the fact that political or oppositional activity does not provide indemnity

from accountability for fraud and theft. In similar cases Parliament even lifts the immunity of deputies.

We are well aware of the acute importance for the Member States of the European Union of the fight against corruption and white-collar crime. This is well indicated in the recent report by the European Commission on the unprecedented scale of corruption in all 28 Member States of the European Union. Whereas the annual volume of money embezzled from European funds used to be in the hundreds of millions of euros, it now amounts to billions. According to the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF), every year the countries of the European Union lose 323 billion euros through corruption, equivalent to almost one third of the European Union's seven-year budget for 2014 to 2020.

In the Swedish newspaper *Göteborgs-Posten*, the European Commissioner for Home Affairs Cecilia Malmström noted that political discussion in the various countries of the European Union gives the impression that corruption is a problem of other countries and that bribes come from abroad. Whilst corruption affects all European Union countries, it takes different forms in the individual countries.

For that reason, we do not understand why the representatives of the European Union are so seriously concerned by the court decision on the offences committed by the Navalny brothers. One would think that given the profound problems in this area in their own countries, there would also be understanding and support for the fight against these manifestations in other countries – unless, of course, this is an attempt to divert attention from embezzlement and corruption in the European Union itself.

Thank you for your attention.