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**STATEMENT BY MR. ANDREY RUDENKO,  
DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE  
RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 957th MEETING OF THE  
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

27 June 2013

**In response to the address by Mr. Sergey Lebedev,  
Chairman of the Executive Committee and Executive Secretary of the  
Commonwealth of Independent States**

Mr. Chairperson,  
Sergey Nikolayevich,

We are pleased to welcome you again in this room, where you spoke three years ago, and are grateful for the detailed report on the current areas of work of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and its tasks for the future. We are interested in strengthening the Commonwealth and developing friendly relations on the basis of partnership with its Members, with which we are bound by close economic, cultural and historical ties.

We fully support the policy of increasing the effectiveness of the CIS as an authoritative regional inter-State organization. We share your view regarding the basic role of the Commonwealth in establishing and developing other integrating associations within the former Soviet Union, such as the Collective Security Treaty Organization, the Eurasian Economic Community, the Customs Union and the Single Economic Space, which in turn help to deepen co-operation among the CIS countries.

The establishment of diverse regional structures in the area covered by both the CIS and the OSCE is entirely in keeping with the logic of integration processes in today's world. It is important to ensure their harmonization and complementary development. This kind of approach is in line with the achievement of the strategic goal set at the OSCE Summit in Astana of building a common and indivisible Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security community. For that reason, we cannot agree with the spurious attempts to oppose different integration projects. Such an approach is out of touch with the realities of the twenty-first century and may lead to a fragmentation of the common security space, the emergence and deepening of dividing lines and, as a result, a reduction in the overall level of security and confidence.

In view of the growing common threats and challenges for the OSCE area, some of which also falls within the area of activity of the CIS, it is extremely important to expand

co-operation between the leading international and regional organizations. First and foremost, this relates to the instability in the Middle East and North Africa as well as the threats emanating from the territory of Afghanistan. Continued close co-ordination on the part of all international and regional organizations and initiatives is required to counter these threats. The basis for such co-operation is provided in the Platform for Co-operative Security adopted at the OSCE Summit in Istanbul in 1999.

This also relates to increasing co-operation between the CIS and the OSCE, something that has our full support. The fight against terrorism, violent extremism and radicalism and combating illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs, trafficking in human beings and other forms of organized crime are among the priority areas for co-operation in our view. In that context, we are in agreement with you in calling for the development of direct contacts between the Department for Security Co-operation of the CIS Executive Committee and the Transnational Threats Department of the OSCE Secretariat.

Sergey Nikolayevich,

We have noted the part of your statement concerned with the work of election observation missions from the CIS. We are pleased to note that their conclusions and assessments regarding the results of election monitoring campaigns in Commonwealth countries are balanced and sound, confirming the high professional level of the CIS observers. It is of fundamental importance that their activities are based on a solid legal basis, including the recommendations for international observers from Commonwealth countries adopted two years ago. We agree with you that this detailed and comprehensive document, in whose preparation representatives of the Central Election Commissions and parliamentarians from CIS countries participated, could also prove useful during the discussion of uniform principles and rules for election observation in the OSCE participating States. In that connection, we also welcome the continued development of co-operation between CIS observer missions and missions from the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

There is potential for expanding co-operation between the CIS and the OSCE in the economic and environmental dimension and in response to natural and man-made emergencies. It is important to develop contacts between the two organizations in the humanitarian sphere, primarily in areas such as countering racism, xenophobia, aggressive nationalism and neo-Nazism, ensuring freedom of movement, liberalizing visa regimes, combating trafficking in human beings and protecting the rights of children.

It is clear that familiarity with the work of the CIS in all the aforementioned areas will allow the OSCE to take on board many interesting and constructive initiatives by Commonwealth countries and pay greater attention to the interests of the CIS countries, and will generally strengthen the diverse links between the two organizations.

We wish you, Sergey Nikolayevich, and the Belarusian Chairmanship of the CIS every success in realizing the tasks and plans to strengthen the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Thank you for your attention.