

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,  
AT THE 1148th MEETING OF THE  
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

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

Mr. Chairperson,

We have already provided explanations on numerous occasions on this topic. I would remind you that the federal and regional law enforcement authorities and institutions of the human rights commissioners are still examining the claims by *Novaya Gazeta* regarding alleged crimes against members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community in the Chechen Republic. There has been no confirmation whatsoever of this information. In the words of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in the Russian Federation, Tatiana Moskalkova, not one person of this category or any of their relatives has approached her, in spite of her willingness to ensure their protection.

The Human Rights Council under the auspices of the Head of the Chechen Republic has analysed the statements being bandied about by foreign media and has not found “even indirect support” for them. Kheda Saratova, a member of the Council, has stated that she has not received a single complaint on this matter.

As for the report by Human Rights Watch, how did you decide that it is based on trustworthy information? The organization claims to have carried out some kind of interviews with various unnamed victims. Their photographs were published – dark silhouettes in hoods. Human Rights Watch has already come up with unsubstantiated if not falsified reports about chemical weapons in Syria. Could this be another piece of fake news?

I should like in particular to draw attention to the words of the leader of the Russian LGBT movement, Nikolai Alekseev, who has never been known for being sympathetic to authority. Only yesterday, in an interview with the news agency Natsionalnaya Sluzhba Novostey (National News Service), he said literally (I quote): “We have not yet seen one fact or heard one name of any persons actually persecuted in Chechnya. Moreover, no one is preventing persons leaving the country from saying who they are and how they have been persecuted to enable these facts to be established. Until they are, we cannot confirm what has

happened there recently.” So where, distinguished colleagues, do you get your assertions from? Have you been picking up rumours from the Internet again?

A few days ago the Head of the Chechen Republic, Ramzan Kadyrov, invited the Chancellor of Germany, Angela Merkel, and the President of France, Emmanuel Macron, to visit the Republic to assess the situation of sexual minorities there for themselves. It will be interesting to learn their reaction.

Thank you for your attention.