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**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,  
AT THE 1285th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

15 October 2020

**On the International Day of the Girl Child**

Mr. Chairperson,

On 11 October we mark the International Day of the Girl Child, which was proclaimed by a United Nations General Assembly resolution in 2011. Its goal is to draw public attention to the challenges facing girls all over the world, to find solutions to these problems and to recall the importance of protecting the rights of and empowering girls.

This includes, in particular, combating discrimination and violence against girls, and measures to ensure their access to education, employment and health care.

Last year, the world celebrated the 30th anniversary of the adoption of the main document on children's issues – the Convention on the Rights of the Child. We are convinced that taking care of children, as the most vulnerable group in society, should be a priority for any State. In that regard, it is regrettable that not all OSCE participating States have ratified this important international treaty.

Protecting children's rights is a priority for Russia. Combating trafficking in children, sexual violence and child pornography, reducing homelessness and abandonment, providing recreational activities and health care for children, including for those living in difficult circumstances, and improving social services for children with special needs are just some of the challenges that need to be overcome to ensure the well-being and harmonious development of the younger generation.

In formulating child protection policies, States need to take into account the characteristics and differences in the needs of girls and boys. We are convinced that the foundations for the personal growth and development of the child are laid in the family. That is why special attention must be paid to the support of that most invaluable social institution.

Thank you for your attention.