

PC.DEL/7/15
15 January 2015

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. ANDREY KELIN,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1031st MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

18 December 2014

On the violation of children's rights in the United States of America

Mr. Chairperson,

We have repeatedly drawn attention to the disturbing situation with regard to the protection of children's rights in the United States of America. In spite of the serious problems – the use of child labour, the dreadful treatment of child immigrants and the increase in the number of homeless children (according to a report by the non-governmental organization National Center on Family Homelessness, one in 30 children, in other words around 2.5 million children, has been homeless at one time or another) – the United States of America has still not acceded to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The protection of children and the creation of a favourable environment for their growth and development are tasks for all of us. The conditions are not ideal in any single country and there are problems in all of them. However, these problems should not be concealed. There is a need for systematic efforts to resolve them through dialogue and co-operation.

At a Permanent Council meeting more than a year ago we recalled the violation of the rights of children in the United States of America in the context of a journalistic investigation by the Reuters news agency on an illegal network of brokers and traffickers of underage children, including through the Internet. Amongst them were 26 orphans from Russia.

We are unfortunately obliged to note that the United States authorities have still not taken any specific measures to rectify the situation. Nothing has been done apart from interdepartmental meetings and declarations about the equal protection of foreign children, included adopted ones from Russia. No plan of action has been elaborated, not one single investigation has been undertaken on cases of the illegal exchange of children, and not one single criminal suit has been instigated.

The administration has not revealed the names of the Russian orphans concerned, referring to the protection of personal information. We would like to see the United States authorities showing the same concern regarding the non-invasion of privacy when they carry

out their extensive wiretaps and the monitoring of private correspondence, conversations and communications by their own and foreign citizens.

The sole legislative initiative, by Senator Landrieu, was aimed not at protecting children but at helping to restructure the lives of underage foreigners in the United States of America, going as far as the exertion of political and diplomatic pressure on States restricting the adoption of their own citizens by foreigners, for which it has been rightly criticized by parents' and civil rights associations.

Given the fact that the United States of America has entered into international commitments to combat trafficking in human beings, including the Addendum to the OSCE Action Plan, we find that references to the prerogative of individual states are unfounded.

We urge the United States authorities to tackle this protracted problem in a serious and responsible manner. All occurrences, including information that in a series of cases children have fallen into the hands of paedophiles for the purpose of making pornographic productions, must be properly investigated and prosecuted.

Thank you for your attention.