



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF LATVIA TO THE UN,
OSCE AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN VIENNA

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ENGLISH only

Statement by the delegation of the Republic of Latvia in response to the intervention of the delegation of the Russian Federation

Permanent Council No.1129,
Vienna, 26 January, 2017

Mr. Chairman,

I did not intend to take the floor on this occasion, however, as the name of my country was mentioned in the statement by Russian delegation, I would like to once again state for record that Latvia fulfills all relevant commitments taken up by it in framework of the Council of Europe and the OSCE.

Currently there are 176 stateless persons residing in Latvia. We would like to emphasize that even though Latvia is not a successor state of USSR, it granted a privileged status and preferential access to citizenship to former Soviet citizens moved to Latvia by the Soviet regime. Apparently this is the group of people referred to by the Russian delegation.

I would like to take this opportunity to assure you, that Latvia has on several occasions eased the naturalization legislation. Current framework provides every opportunity for non-citizens to acquire citizenship. Whether to use this opportunity is an act of individual will. No one can be forced into citizenship.

Thank you, Mr.Chairman.