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**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,  
AT THE 1095th MEETING OF THE  
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

7 April 2016

**In connection with the guilty verdict handed down by the  
International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia against  
Mr. Radovan Karadžić**

Mr. Chairperson,

On 24 March 2016, the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) found the former Bosnian Serb leader, Radovan Karadžić, guilty and sentenced him to 40 years in prison.

This is the latest in a series of exceedingly harsh verdicts handed down by the ICTY against Serbs, whereas other participants in the civil war in the former Yugoslavia have been acquitted, such as the Croatian General Ante Gotovina, the Kosovo Albanian Ramush Haradinaj and the Bosniak field commander Naser Orić.

The selection of the date for announcing the verdict comes across as particularly sacrilegious: the very day on which a different crime had been committed, for which the ICTY had refused to conduct an inquiry, namely, the start of the bombing of the former Yugoslavia by coalition forces of NATO States.

The civil war in the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s and the NATO bombings are a tragic page in world history and in the modern history of the OSCE. Although it is hard to imagine that crimes were committed in this war by only one side, the ICTY continues to construct the myth that the Serbian people alone are responsible for these events. As a consequence, progress towards inter-ethnic and inter-confessional reconciliation in the Balkans has been seriously undermined.

After pledging its support to the establishment of the ICTY in 1993, Russia directly stated that the Tribunal must not become a place for settling scores or an instrument of revenge but be a genuine institution of justice that will bring about the triumph of fairness and common sense. These expectations have not been met. Today even the judges of the Tribunal have publicly commented on the dubious methods of its work.

An illustration of the systemic flaws of the ICTY's work and another high-profile decision by the Tribunal was the acquittal on 31 March 2016 of the leader of the Serbian Radical Party, Vojislav Šešelj. The innocent Serbian politician had been in detention for over 12 years.

Lest we forget, as an ad hoc tribunal and thus a temporary institution by its very definition, the ICTY has now been in existence for over 20 years and squandered billions of dollars on its activities. It has ignored the deadlines set out by the United Nations Security Council for completing its work and lies as a heavy burden on the shoulders of the global community. We are firmly of the belief that the funds allocated to the ICTY could be of greater benefit if they went towards restoring justice and towards reconciliation processes in countries of the former Yugoslavia.

Thank you for your attention.