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**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1210th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

20 December 2018

**In response to the report by the Chairperson of the Economic and
Environmental Committee of the OSCE Permanent Council for 2018**

Mr. Chairperson,

We thank the distinguished Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan, Kairat Sarybay, for his highly professional leadership of the Economic and Environmental Committee this year and his personal contribution to its work. We note the informative and fruitful discussions in the Committee and within the framework of the 26th Economic and Environmental Forum and the Economic and Environmental Dimension Implementation Meeting. These discussions culminated in the adoption at the OSCE Ministerial Council meeting in Milan on 7 December of two substantial documents (on the digital economy and on human capital development in the digital era), which make an important contribution to effective multilateralism and a unifying agenda.

The agreed documents reinforce the positive potential of the digital transformation and set out the main areas for co-operation by participating States in this field. We believe that common efforts to create a competitive environment in the digital economy, overcoming persistent imbalances in the digital sphere, promoting connectivity and providing access to education and training are key areas for co-operation.

The theme selected by the future Slovak Chairmanship of the OSCE for the 27th Economic and Environmental Forum “Promoting economic progress and security in the OSCE area through energy co-operation, new technologies, good governance and connectivity in the digital era” is also a logical continuation. We are convinced that engaged dialogue on all these issues, which will resume on 28 and 29 January 2019 at the first preparatory meeting for the Forum, will help to foster international economic co-operation and the alignment of integration processes in the OSCE’s area of responsibility, and ultimately the formation of a common economic space from Lisbon to Vladivostok.

In that connection, we consider it important to maintain the constructive and depoliticized nature of the discussions in Economic and Environmental Forum events and in the day-to-day work of the Committee. Special meetings on combating corruption,

developing transport, introducing state-of-the-art technologies into the economy, creating smart cities and energy networks, and preventing disasters and dealing with their aftermath are of practical interest. We need to utilize the second dimension's unifying potential to strengthen co-operation among participating States and exchange experience on these issues, which are relevant to all of us. The Russian Federation is willing to take part in this work.

We wish the distinguished Ambassador Kairat Sarybay continued success as Chairperson of the Economic and Environmental Committee of the OSCE Permanent Council. You can always count on our support.

Thank you for your attention.