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**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1228th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

16 May 2019

In response to the report by the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan

Mr. Chairperson,

We are pleased to see the distinguished Ambassador John MacGregor again at a meeting of the Permanent Council and join in welcoming him.

The work of the OSCE Project Co-ordinator remains extremely dynamic. Interaction by Uzbekistan with the Organization is also on the rise. Close co-ordination with the host country makes it possible to focus on useful projects and to provide assistance without imposing forms and orientations on it. The Road Map for Co-operation between Uzbekistan and the OSCE, based on the national development priorities, assessed and formulated by the Government in Tashkent itself, plays a positive role. We firmly believe that this co-operation format makes it possible to achieve the greatest practical return on the efforts put in by the OSCE field presence.

We note the balance in the Co-ordinator's project portfolio. The wide-ranging co-operation with other international organizations in Uzbekistan, above all the United Nations system, but also the diplomatic missions of the OSCE participating States, is a positive factor.

The high degree of instability in Afghanistan and the activity of radical and terrorist organizations demand greater attention. There is a great need for the Co-ordinator's efforts to assist the Uzbek authorities in building national capacities to counter terrorism and combat the drugs threat. In this context we believe that it is important to make use of the potential for co-operation with expert specialist regional organizations such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation and the Collective Security Treaty Organization.

The Co-ordinator's efforts in the economic and environmental dimension deserve praise. We see continuity in the support of national policy to combat corruption, strengthen risk assessment mechanisms in relation to money laundering and the financing of terrorism, promoting a green economy and reducing the negative impact of economic activity on the environment. We assume that at a certain point the field presence will devote more attention to regional co-operation, particularly economic co-operation, and give it due consideration in project activities.

We consider the work in the humanitarian basket to be important, in particular on issues such as promoting legal reform, combating trafficking in human beings and torture, and ensuring the rights of citizens to access to information.

In general, we welcome the efforts made by the Co-ordinator to support the policies of the leadership of the Republic of Uzbekistan in the implementation of its wide-ranging reform programme.

Mr. Chairperson,

Building on the trusting and strategic allied relations between Russia and Uzbekistan, our countries are working to extend their co-operation. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Mr. Sergey Lavrov, visited Tashkent at the beginning of May. One of the key focuses of the talks was the implementation of the agreements reached in October 2018 during the State visit to Uzbekistan by the President of Russia, Mr. Vladimir Putin, including a whole complex of accords and projects in the humanitarian and economic spheres worth around 27 billion US dollars.

In conclusion, I should like to wish Ambassador MacGregor and his team further success in their work.

Thank you for your attention.