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**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1165th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

23 November 2017

**On the verdict of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former
Yugoslavia in the case of Ratko Mladić**

Mr. Chairperson,

We are compelled once again to note that the guilty verdict pronounced by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in the case of the former chief of staff of the Republika Srpska armed forces, Ratko Mladić, is a continuation of the politicized and biased policy that has dominated the work of that body from the outset. The one-sided anti-Serb interpretation of the tragic events of the 1990s in the former Yugoslavia artificially taken by the Tribunal as a basis not only fails to contribute to the implementation of the basic principle of the inevitability of punishment for war crimes, but also undermines time and again the process of restoring mutual trust in the Western Balkans.

The Hague Tribunal objectively failed to cope with the main task of impartially bringing to justice all the perpetrators of the worst crimes during the Yugoslav conflict. Furthermore, the “selective justice” of the ICTY, which acquitted people in the face of the evidence available, gave a number of individuals a ticket to a life in politics and granted them freedom that the innocent victims will never have.

It is significant that the ICTY did not see a crime in the actions of the field commanders who in 1992–1994 took shelter in Srebrenica and from there carried out attacks against the Serb civilian population. The defectiveness of the Tribunal’s logic is also manifested in the fact that in declaring Mladić guilty of holding United Nations personnel at defence facilities to protect these installations from NATO’s aerial bombardment, the ICTY does not say a word about the unlawful nature of NATO’s military operations in the former Yugoslavia, which resulted in deaths among the civilian population and large-scale destruction, for which no one in the West has ever answered.

The Tribunal was also far removed from generally accepted standards regarding the time-frame of judicial proceedings and the fundamental rights to life, health and medical care. Once more we draw attention to the fact that in May of this year the ICTY Trial

Chamber denied the application for the temporary release of Ratko Mladić for treatment in Russia, despite exhaustive guarantees provided by the Russian authorities.

We expect the ICTY to cease operations by the end of 2017. We trust that the “residual mechanism” when considering all cases submitted by the Tribunal, including a possible appeal against the verdict in the case of Ratko Mladić, will display maximum effectiveness along with professionalism and impartiality, which are essential for ensuring peace and stability in the Western Balkans.

And I urge those colleagues who are really interested in the background of this “court” to familiarize themselves with the memoirs of the former ICTY prosecutor, Carla Del Ponte, entitled *The Hunt*. The atrocities of the Kosovo Liberation Army described in that book still make the blood run cold. I can assure you that you will learn a lot about the Tribunal’s activities and about the “politicians” who became people you could shake hands with in Western countries and who it is suggested we should invite to OSCE events. Perhaps the least distressing thing you will read is that the victims of these monsters, among them Russian women, were themselves simply pleading to be killed.

Thank you for your attention.