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**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1406th (SPECIAL) MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

17 January 2023

**In response to the address by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the
Republic of Armenia, H.E. Mr. Ararat Mirzoyan**

We welcome you, esteemed Ararat Samvelovich, to this special meeting of the Permanent Council.

In connection with the assessments made about the state of affairs in the region, we should like to point out that Russia – both at the political level and on the ground, in the form of contacts with the parties concerned – is taking all possible measures to de-escalate tensions and resolve the situation. Thus, as a result of the Russian peacekeepers' efforts, the passage of ambulance crews and vehicles of the International Committee of the Red Cross through the Lachin corridor has been organized; the supply of gas to Nagorno-Karabakh residents has been promptly restored, as has Internet access. The parameters for repair works on electricity power lines are being agreed on.

At present, the provision of essential items for the local population is taking place solely thanks to the delivery of humanitarian assistance by road vehicles of the Russian peacekeeping contingent. In that regard, we express our concern over the lack of progress in restoring a fully functioning transport route for the movement of people, vehicles and cargo in both directions, as laid down in the statement of 9 November 2020 by the President of Russia, the Prime Minister of Armenia and the President of Azerbaijan.

The deteriorating humanitarian situation in the region is most alarming. The local population should not be made to pay the price for political differences between the Governments of Armenia and Azerbaijan. The Lachin corridor must remain under the control of the Russian peacekeeping contingent and be used only for the purposes indicated in the statement of 9 November 2020. We call upon our Armenian and Azerbaijani partners to demonstrate goodwill and jointly look for mutually acceptable compromises with a view to swiftly resolving the situation around the Lachin corridor, agreeing on the parameters for the exploitation of ore deposits and resolving problems with the electricity supply. We stand ready to facilitate this in every possible way. It is our conviction that a sustainable and lasting solution is possible only on the basis of strict compliance with all the provisions of the trilateral agreements reached by the leaders of Russia, Armenia and Azerbaijan.

We should like to emphasize, in particular, that we regard any provocative actions and public attacks against the Russian peacekeeping contingent as unacceptable and detrimental to the process of normalization of Armenian-Azerbaijani relations. The Russian peacekeepers are making a key contribution to the maintenance of security within the area of their deployment, as was noted by the leaders of Russia, Armenia and Azerbaijan at their summit in Sochi on 31 October 2022.

We call for the comprehensive implementation of the whole set of Russian-Armenian-Azerbaijani agreements reached at the highest level, which are aimed at unblocking transport and economic links in the region, delimiting the Armenian-Azerbaijani border, paving the way for a peace treaty between Armenia and Azerbaijan, and establishing contacts between public figures, experts and parliamentarians from both countries.

Thank you for your attention.