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**STATEMENT BY
MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1352nd MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

27 January 2022

International Holocaust Remembrance Day

Mr. Chairperson,

We welcome the distinguished Secretary General of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, Kathrin Meyer.

On 27 January 1944, the siege of Leningrad, which may be described as one of the greatest crimes against humanity in history, was completely lifted. There is and can be no excuse for the Nazis, who, as in the Holocaust, deliberately massacred civilians on a massive scale.

Exactly one year later, on 27 January 1945, the Red Army liberated the largest concentration camp Auschwitz-Birkenau (Oświęcim). As many as four million people were exterminated in this factory of death, including around a million Jews. In 2005, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 27 January as International Holocaust Remembrance Day. The Holocaust claimed the lives of six million Jews, 40 per cent of whom were citizens of the Soviet Union. The Soviet people lost more than 26 million of their fellow citizens in the war with Nazi Germany. Preserving the historical memory of those terrible events is, without exaggeration, a global task.

The Week of Remembrance, traditionally organized by the Russian Jewish Congress, the Moscow City Government, the Holocaust Centre and the Federal Agency for Ethnic Affairs, is taking place for the eighth time in our country at the federal level from 17 January to 4 February. The series of commemorative and educational events includes academic conferences, webinars, films and plays, social media activities and much more. Since 2009, more than eight dozen monuments and plaques to Holocaust victims have been erected as part of the “Restoring Dignity” programme.

“Protecting the Future”, the third international conference on combating anti-Semitism, racism and xenophobia, took place in Moscow in November 2021. It was organized by the World Jewish Congress, the Russian Jewish Congress, the Federal Agency for Ethnic Affairs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia.

Our country is actively working in various international forums to preserve the memory of the Holocaust and other Nazi crimes. On 20 January this year, the United Nations General Assembly, with the support of the Russian Government, adopted a resolution condemning attempts to deny the Holocaust. This document recalls that, 80 years ago – on 20 January 1942 – representatives of the Nazi Party and other high-ranking officials of Nazi Germany gathered at a conference in Wannsee to discuss their horrendous plans.

In addition, each year, Russia and a number of other countries, including OSCE participating States, propose the adoption of a United Nations General Assembly resolution on combating the glorification of Nazism. The number of co-sponsors is steadily growing. Only two countries vote year after year for spurious reasons against the document, which condemns those who exterminated the Jews and other peoples. In that connection, we should like to recall the words of United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres: “The Holocaust defined the United Nations. Our very name was coined to describe the alliance fighting the Nazi regime and its allies.”

Mr. Chairperson,

The situation on the ground in our Organization’s area of responsibility is shocking. According to a report by a number of authoritative Jewish associations (the World Zionist Organization and the Jewish Agency for Israel), 2021 was the most anti-Semitic year in the past decade. The majority of incidents took place in Europe, followed by the OSCE participating States across the ocean. Other well-known non-governmental organizations, such as the Anti-Defamation League, have also noted the negative trends in the countries of North America. According to the Anti-Defamation League’s reports, in January of this year, there were some 30 anti-Semitic incidents in the United States of America, a significant number of which had strong Nazi overtones.

The United States’ neighbour Canada also has work to do. In a recent article in *The Hill Times*, experts and heads of Jewish organizations explicitly pointed to the lack of an appropriate response from the Canadian Government to attempts to distort the Holocaust and to incidents involving the glorification of Nazi collaborators. Chief Executive Officer of B’nai Brith Canada Michael Mostyn stressed the need for a “loud and clear” government response to this situation both at home and abroad.

In the European part of the OSCE, the situation continues to worsen. In some countries, annual gatherings and torchlit processions take place in honour of those who actively collaborated with the Nazis and were accomplices in their crimes. These are by no means “commemorative events”, as the esteemed Ambassador of Estonia said at the Permanent Council meeting on 20 January, but blatant examples of the glorification of Nazism and attempts to distort history.

New memorials are being established to those who fought alongside Hitler’s Germany or collaborated with it, committing war crimes and crimes against humanity. Streets, schools and even bus stops are being renamed in their honour. Ultra-nationalists openly threaten anti-fascists. A veritable war has been declared on monuments to the liberating soldiers. It is also deeply disturbing that increasing efforts are being made to elevate those who fought against the anti-Hitler coalition or who collaborated with the Nazis to the status of national heroes and figureheads of national liberation movements. Moreover, this is happening in countries that survived Nazi occupation during the Second World War and whose heroic peoples made a significant contribution to the defeat of Nazism.

This serves as confirmation that attempts to deny the Holocaust and to spread racism, Nazism, neo-Nazism and racial intolerance pose a threat to international peace and security. We welcome the decision of the Polish OSCE Chairmanship to devote its first event in the human dimension to combating

anti-Semitism. However, this is clearly not enough. We must finally begin to discuss the sources of the phenomenon itself, which the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Combating Anti-Semitism, Rabbi Andrew Baker, attributes to movements associated with neo-Nazis, among others. In that context, we should like to highlight the importance of taking this issue into account, especially when agreeing on the “package” of and agendas for human dimension events, above all for the annual Human Dimension Implementation Meeting.

Our Organization – for security and co-operation – cannot continue to turn a blind eye to these phenomena. As United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres said in his recent speech on the occasion of the International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust: “Silence in the face of hatred is complicity.”

Thank you for your attention.