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**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE
1320th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

17 June 2021

On the report by the Head of the OSCE Centre in Ashgabat

Madam Chairperson,

We are pleased to see the distinguished Ambassador John MacGregor again, now in his new capacity, and we join in welcoming him and wishing him every success.

We commend the level of co-operation between the OSCE Centre in Ashgabat and the authorities of Turkmenistan on the co-ordination and harmonization of all project activities. We consider this approach to be key to the success of any of our Organization's field operations, which are designed to help strengthen the capacity of host countries.

We would mention in particular the Centre's efforts to enhance the capacity of Turkmenistan's law enforcement agencies to counter terrorism, extremism, drug trafficking and other forms of transnational organized crime. We hope that the OSCE Centre will actively involve experts from the relevant Russian departments and institutions in events held in Turkmenistan so as to exchange experience and develop recommendations in these important areas. There are already successful examples of co-operation with the All-Russian Institute for Advanced Training of Employees of the Russian Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Siberian Law Institute of the Russian Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Rostov Service Dogs Training School of the Russian Ministry of Internal Affairs.

Furthermore, we are confident that the OSCE Centre has not only something to offer in terms of best practices and experience, but also something to learn from host country experts, taking into account national and regional specificities. Indeed, this applies equally to other OSCE field operations in Central Asia.

We believe it is no less important to co-operate in building national cybersecurity capabilities. In 2019, the Presidents of Russia and Turkmenistan adopted a Joint Statement on Co-operation in the Field of International Information Security, in which they advocated strengthening co-operation on the lawful use of modern information and communication technologies.

Against the background of increasing transborder threats in close proximity to Central Asian borders, we note the Centre's contribution to ensuring the security of Turkmenistan's land borders. We support the involvement of the field operation in reforming the prison system. Intensive co-operation with the Ministry

of Finance and Economy of Turkmenistan on the national assessment of risks in the field of countering money laundering and the financing of terrorism, as well as the fight against corruption, has obvious added value.

Turkmenistan has traditionally been one of Russia's key partners in the Central Asian region. The Strategic Partnership Agreement signed in Ashgabat in 2017 underpins all our actions and plans. These plans were implemented even during the pandemic, and contacts took place in all forms, including face-to-face. In that connection, I should like to mention the productive visit to the Russian Federation of a high-level delegation from Turkmenistan headed by the Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan, Rashid Meredov, and the Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers of Turkmenistan, Serdar Berdimuhamedov, from 30 March to 2 April, during which a number of meetings were held with our high-level representatives, several documents were signed, and bilateral inter-agency consultations on regional security and the issue of Afghanistan were held.

I should like to note that despite the unfavourable global economic situation, last year trade between our countries increased by almost 40 per cent.

In conclusion, I should like to wish Ambassador MacGregor and his team the best of health and success in all their undertakings. Given the professional achievements in the past, I am sure they will be striking.

Thank you for your attention.