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**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1124th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

15 December 2016

**In response to the OSCE Special Representative and
Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings**

Mr. Chairperson,
Ms. Jarbussynova,

We warmly welcome you to today's meeting. We are grateful for the detailed report on the Office's work and future plans. We greatly value your professional approach and contribution to the OSCE's work on combating trafficking in human beings. We look forward to continuing our fruitful co-operation in the coming year. We appreciate the screening of the video clip, which clearly shows the urgent need to combat this crime.

Unfortunately, despite the international community's efforts, it has not yet been possible to eradicate this modern form of slavery: many thousands continue to suffer from trafficking in human beings worldwide, including children. At the same time, criminal groups frequently practise this illicit business with impunity, reaping huge profits.

In that connection, we believe that the holding of annual conferences of the Alliance against Trafficking in Persons focusing on the various aspects of this issue is a useful practice.

The Special Representative's country visits, enabling specific national and regional characteristics to be considered more fully in her work, have proved to be a good practice. In February 2017, we shall be pleased to welcome you, Ms. Jarbussynova, on an official visit to the Russian Federation. We are convinced that this will usher in a new era in our constructive co-operation with the Special Representative.

We welcome the attention paid by the Office to combating trafficking in children. This is becoming a particularly severe challenge in the current migration crisis situation. Unaccompanied minor migrants easily fall victim to traders in "human commodities" – they are drawn into criminal activity, become victims of sexual exploitation or end up on the labour black market. As we have stated on several occasions, this subject is worthy of a separate major event at the OSCE.

Close attention needs to be paid to trafficking in persons for the purposes of extracting organs, tissues and cells. The UN is already carrying out preventive work in this regard. We believe that the OSCE could also make a contribution to countering this scourge, within its mandate. A first step in that direction was already taken in 2013 when the Special Representative prepared a detailed report on the situation with this matter in the OSCE area.

To prevent trafficking in general, its socio-economic antecedents must be eliminated in the countries of origin, including through ensuring access to education, employment assistance and social services. Effective measures are also required to eliminate the demand for “human commodities” in the destination countries.

In conclusion, allow me to thank you, Ms. Jarbussynova, for your tireless and effective work. With all best wishes for the coming holiday season, I wish you and your team every success in the future.

Thank you for your attention.