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Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. ANDREY KELIN,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1007th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

10 July 2014

**In response to the address by the
Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, Mr. Frans Timmermans**

Mr. Chairperson,

We are pleased to welcome the distinguished Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Mr. Frans Timmermans.

Minister,

Last December, you yourself came to the Maidan and, unlike many of your European colleagues, made a very sound assessment of the situation in Ukraine. I will recall that in your address to the Ministerial Council meeting in Kyiv, you noted the country's unique frontier location. In this regard, you warned of the danger of forcing its people to make an artificial choice in favour of the East or West.

Unfortunately your warning, like other rational voices in the current European political establishment, was not heard. As a result, we have ended up with a profound crisis: in essence, a civil war in the centre of Europe.

If the Minister has questions about the actions of the Russian Federation or the motivations behind those actions, then I would advise him to liaise directly with his colleague in Moscow, Mr. Lavrov, as do many ministers, including those from European countries.

But I will be brief in my response. The current critical situation offers a unique chance to rethink our approaches to the future of the continent. It is hardly as though we all wish that it would once again become an arena of ongoing tensions or riven with dividing lines.

Mr. Chairperson,

Relations between Russia and the Netherlands are developing dynamically in partnership, and high-level political contact is maintained. King Willem-Alexander has recently visited Russia twice. The ties between our countries go back four centuries.

Furthermore, the Netherlands has traditionally supported a deepening of our partnership with the European Union. We are highly appreciative of this.

The Netherlands has consistently played a leading role among the Russian Federation's external trade partners in Europe. The Kingdom is the second largest investor in the Russian economy worldwide. Energy is a particularly promising sector. What is more, Dutch oil and gas companies continue to strengthen their presence on the Russian market. In short, the potential for partnership with the Netherlands is extremely solid, and we intend to promote it in all sectors.

Thank you for your attention.