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**STATEMENT BY
MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH, PERMANENT
REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE
1067th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

10 September 2015

In response to the report by the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine

Mr. Chairperson,

We welcome the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine, Ambassador Vaidotas Verba, to the meeting of the Permanent Council and thank him for his report on his office's activities.

A challenging task lies before the Co-ordinator: to ensure his mandate is effectively fulfilled against the background of the ongoing Ukrainian internal crisis. We consider it important that projects overseen by him in Ukraine are implemented while keeping in mind the need to take into account the legal rights and interests of all the country's citizens regardless of their place of residence or their national, linguistic, cultural or religious affiliation.

This also applies to those who live in the Donbas territories that are not controlled by Kyiv. We, of course, have supported and will support initiatives to promote inclusive, pan-Ukrainian dialogue, which would facilitate a peaceful resolution of the current Ukrainian crisis and restore trust between the various parts of Ukraine. However, this should be a really serious, results-driven discussion between people who hold different political views. Unfortunately, it is difficult to term what it is the office does within the extrabudgetary project with the catchy name "Reconstruction through Dialogue", a national dialogue provided for by the Geneva agreements. It is more like a hobnob between the central authorities and officials appointed by them to the so-called civil-military administration of the Donetsk region. Representatives of certain areas of Donetsk and Luhansk are not admitted. Therefore, attempts to classify such activities as part of Kyiv's implementation of the Minsk agreements do not, to put it mildly, appear convincing.

We commend the training session led by the Co-ordinator for monitors from the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM) on the detection of crimes related to human trafficking. We trust that this subject will be duly reflected in SMM reports.

We support the plans of the Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine to support the Ukrainian authorities in democratization, good governance and the rule of law. Unfortunately, we have not yet seen any significant advances in this direction. If anything, the opposite is true. In Ukraine, political censorship and the persecution of public figures, journalists and ordinary citizens who criticize the government is intensifying. The rampancy of radical nationalists and extremists is not subsiding. It is for the Ukrainians to judge for themselves how successful the authorities are in combating corruption. If data from the Ukrainian media is to be trusted, the situation has only worsened since the Maidan.

It remains to be seen what practical results the Co-ordinator's work will yield in such important aspects as helping to train the Ukrainian police and strengthening national capacity in combating organized crime, cybercrime, human trafficking and terrorism, including its financing and money-laundering, as well as assisting with the social integration of retired military personnel, detecting and destroying ammunition from the time of the Second World War, and achieving gender equality and countering gender crimes.

We consider the mine clearance project to be promising. Unfortunately, civilian deaths and injuries as a result of landmines are reported on a regular basis.

As for the calls to extend the Co-ordinator's activities to the Republic of Crimea and the federal city of Sevastopol, which are constituent entities of the Russian Federation, they are clearly untenable.

In conclusion, we should like to wish Mr. Verba every success in implementing projects that could help the Ukrainian Government to carry out reforms aimed at ensuring the rights and interests of all citizens and all regions of the country.

Thank you for your attention.