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**STATEMENT BY
MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1387th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

2 September 2022

On the situation in the Serbian province of Kosovo and Metohija

Mr. Chairperson,

We should like to share Russia's assessments of the situation in the Serbian province of Kosovo and Metohija. The fact that the authorities in Belgrade and Priština have reached a partial compromise has defused the situation somewhat. It had been on the point of slipping out of control as a result of the actions of the Kosovo authorities. That being said, those "efforts", which are in effect aimed at undermining regional stability, are unfortunately being stepped up. Over the past year alone, we have discussed at the Permanent Council on several occasions the provocative steps by the authorities in Priština.

For example, last autumn, owing to decisions by the "government" of Mr. Albin Kurti, the situation reached the point of no return, when Kosovo special forces and armoured vehicles were massed in the north of the territory. The Kosovo security forces used firearms – dozens of civilians were wounded.

In January and April of this year, the Kosovo Serbs were deprived of basic rights when the Kosovo Albanian elite did not allow them to take part in, respectively, a referendum and elections in their own territory. Significantly, the assurances made previously by the US Government and the EU authorities in Brussels to the effect that the Serbian presidential and parliamentary elections would be organized in that territory in accordance with established practice going back to 2008, namely with the assistance of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo, proved to be empty words.

A few days ago, thanks to the "efforts" of the authorities in Priština, the situation was again on the verge of tipping over into an inter-ethnic conflict. In this context, the authorities in Belgrade, which had displayed political sagacity, were given certain, as we understand it, oral guarantees that the agreements on the procedure for crossing the administrative line between central Serbia and Kosovo would be complied with. Everyone knows full well what assurances of this kind are worth, seeing how even the written agreements from 2013 on the establishment of a Community of Serb Municipalities are being overtly torpedoed by the Kosovo authorities.

Nor should it be forgotten that the pressing issue of vehicle number plates still remains unresolved. The take-it-or-leave-it rhetoric of the authorities in Priština effectively rules out any hope of compromise solutions.

We for our part consider it essential to recall once again that the international legal framework for resolving the Kosovo problem continues to be United Nations Security Council resolution 1244, which enshrines the territorial integrity of Serbia. It is precisely on that basis that a fair and viable solution should be sought. We stand ready to do everything we can to facilitate this.

Thank you for your attention.