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**STATEMENT BY
AMBASSADOR STEFANO BALDI, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ITALY,
AT THE 81st (SPECIAL) JOINT MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT
COUNCIL AND THE OSCE FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION**

14 April 2021

**Activation of paragraph 16.3 of the Vienna Document 2011 on
Confidence and Security-Building Measures, Chapter III “Mechanism for consultation
and co-operation as regards unusual military activities”, paragraph 16.3 “Meeting of
all participating States regarding unusual military activities”**

Mr. Chairperson,

Italy aligns itself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union. I should now like to add a few remarks in a national capacity.

We continue to follow with apprehension the reports of developments on the ground near the Russian-Ukrainian border and in Crimea, which are understandably causing great concern among some participating States.

The issue in question today is not the assessment of the legitimacy of these military manoeuvres on the national territory of a participating State, as has also been claimed by our esteemed Russian colleagues on social media, but the purpose of such manoeuvres and, above all, the “threat perception” they have generated in other participating States.

In the not too distant past, in order to prevent doubts and misunderstandings from triggering crises among participating States, we agreed together here at the OSCE on a complex and comprehensive package of transparency and confidence-building measures that, today, are proving increasingly necessary and relevant. These tools are available to all – I repeat, to all – and allow, through dialogue, for the clarification of issues that could undermine regional stability.

We therefore congratulate Ukraine for resuming dialogue on its “risk perception” by activating the mechanism provided for in paragraph 16 of the Vienna Document; at the same time, we strongly urge the Russian Federation to respond to the questions raised during the consultations held last Monday, pursuant to paragraph 16.2 of the Vienna Document, and to accept the recommendations that will be made during this joint meeting of the Forum for Security Co-operation and the Permanent Council.

To conclude, Mr. Chairperson, allow me to remind you how useful it would be today to take advantage also of the operational tools provided for by the Treaty on Open Skies.

Mr. Chairperson, I request that this statement be included in the journal of the meeting.

Thank you.