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Permanent Delegation of the Republic of Belarus to the OSCE

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HEAD OF THE DELEGATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS,
AT THE PLENARY MEETING OF THE FIRST OSCE
ANNUAL SECURITY REVIEW CONFERENCE**

25 June 2003

The delegation of Belarus would like to greet all the Conference participants and express its hope that this event, so important for all of us, will be successful. We see it as a real opportunity to intensify the dialogue in all the dimensions of security.

We are grateful to the Netherlands Chairmanship for its active work in preparing for the Conference, and to our distinguished speakers for giving us valuable food for thought.

Belarus, like other participating States, is concerned about the security situation that has developed in the OSCE area. Here quite a number of problems have accumulated, and I should like to give our views on some of them.

The basic principles of European security are unity and indivisibility, and the need to recognize that all have an equal right to security. The changed geopolitical landscape for European security and the emergence of structures laying claim to self-sufficiency represent a definite threat to these principles and cause us serious concern. This concern is intensified by a continuing growth of substantial differences in levels of politico-military, economic and democratic development, both between individual States and between their organizations and groups.

In addition, there exist today a large number of subregional organizations and subsystems dealing directly with security problems, a situation that continually requires the solution of problems of mutual co-ordination in our common efforts to strengthen pan-European security. The OSCE could very well play a leading role in this field.

Furthermore, differences are becoming apparent in the interests of the various countries in the security area. Both old and new threats to security, including terrorism, transnational crime and trafficking are perceived and assessed differently at the national level. In this regard, there is an urgent need to intensify the dialogue on security matters, with participation by all States, including small countries.

We believe that, taking into account the above points, a transformation of the existing mechanisms of the OSCE for guaranteeing security, adjusted to the new geopolitical realities and to contemporary challenges and threats, is required.

It is our profound conviction that any improvement in the European security system must be based on strict compliance, without double standards, with the obligations already assumed by the participating States in all dimensions of security.

In this connection, we attach particular importance today to the development of the politico-military dimension of the OSCE and, in particular, to the further development of the arms control system.

We hope that participating States will show the necessary political will to allow us to overcome the existing problems and proceed to a new stage in ensuring security in the European region.