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REPUBLIC OF BELARUS, AT THE 2013 ANNUAL SECURITY
REVIEW CONFERENCE**

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Opening session

Mr. Chairperson,
Distinguished colleagues,

First of all, I should like on behalf of the Republic of Belarus to welcome you to the Annual Security Review Conference and also to thank the Ukrainian Chairmanship for organizing this event.

We are grateful to our distinguished keynote speakers for their informative statements, which should form a good basis for our discussions over the next two days on a wide range of pan-European security issues.

The Helsinki+40 process was a logical continuation of the Astana Commemorative Declaration, which calls for the creation of a Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security community. The strategic approach and sequential character of this process provided for in the corresponding decision at the Dublin Ministerial Council give us reason to hope that the collective efforts of the three OSCE Chairmanships, with the support of the Forum for Security Co-operation, will lay a solid foundation on which a security community can be formed. The Helsinki+40 process should result in a document defining the basic principles of the security community and the strategic vision of the OSCE for the future.

At the same time, it is important that the norms, principles and commitments do not remain mere declarations but are put into practice with maximum effectiveness. In the history of the OSCE there are quite a few sad examples of fundamental conceptual documents that have been adopted by the Organization but have remained inactive or have not been implemented because of a lack of trust among participating States or as a result of differences in their conceptions of security.

Unfortunately, we are obliged to note that inertial tendencies continue to prevail in the OSCE and that the work of the Organization is being held up significantly, making it impossible to deal qualitatively and effectively with the issues of key importance that it was created at the time to resolve.

For the OSCE to be really relevant and effective, it must focus on resolving the problems of defining importance for the security of all participating States. One priority in this regard is the fight against new threats and challenges – terrorism, organized crime, drug trafficking, illegal migration and trafficking in human beings. This issue is of special interest to Belarus, which makes an important contribution to global anti-trafficking activities.

We are gratified to note the initiative by the Ukrainian Chairmanship to revive the dialogue on arms control in Europe. The need for collective consideration of possible ways of developing pan-European arms control regimes and confidence- and security-building measures and their adaptation to the changing politico-military situation in the OSCE region has already been looming for a long time. We trust that the joint efforts will create a reliable basis for a future regime that will take account of the security interests of all OSCE participating States.

We hope that during the Conference the participating States will be able to find ways and means of resolving existing differences and conflicts. The results of this work will determine the relevance of the OSCE and its ability to play a truly important role in the modern European security architecture. The responsibility for this lies with all participating States. On us depends not only the future of the OSCE and the security and stability of our region but also the creation of an atmosphere within the Organization most conducive to seeking acceptable forms of constructive collaboration and a way of arriving at pragmatic solutions together.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.