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DEPARTMENT OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE
REPUBLIC OF BELARUS, AT THE OPENING SESSION OF THE
2011 ANNUAL SECURITY REVIEW CONFERENCE**

30 June 2011

Mr. Chairperson,

Allow me to welcome and thank the Permanent State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania, Mr. Kestutis Jankauskas, and our distinguished guest, Mr. Anders Fogh Rasmussen, NATO Secretary General, for their highly interesting statements, which have certainly set the right tone for discussion at this OSCE Annual Security Review Conference.

This Conference is one of the basic OSCE platforms for assessing the situation and possible directions of security co-operation in the Organization's area of responsibility. Unfortunately, we must all openly accept today that the threats and challenges to our common security are not diminishing. There are still serious conflicts between individual participating States. This is what makes the OSCE so meaningful and explains the significance of its concept of comprehensive, indivisible and co-operative security and the importance of its unique format and culture of political dialogue.

At the OSCE Astana Summit last year the leaders of our countries discussed the need for the construction of a genuine security community without any dividing lines in the OSCE region. This is our common strategic target for the future.

We are convinced that combating transnational threats and challenges such as terrorism, organized crime, trafficking in human beings, drug trafficking and illegal migration must remain among the priorities of our work together. It will be important to strengthen cyber security. We are in agreement that there is a need for additional efforts to make progress in settling frozen conflicts.

We welcome the significant progress that has been achieved in the past year on updating the Vienna Document 1999 of the Negotiations on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures, one of the basic OSCE documents in the area of hard security. We are confident that it should be possible to reach agreement and adopt a new version of the Vienna Document at the Ministerial Council meeting in Vilnius, bringing it into line with

modern demands for verification activities. We assume that this will merely be the start of a comprehensive process of adapting the document to today's politico-military realities.

It is also important to continue to seek ways of overcoming the crisis in the conventional arms control regime in Europe. We hope that, in spite of the persisting differences of opinion, the Vienna discussions in the 36-State format will permit a general understanding to be reached soon on the future of the regime and an agreed basic framework for further negotiations.

Mr. Chairperson,

Belarus consistently supports the intensification and development of co-operation in all aspects of security between the OSCE and other international and regional organizations operating in its area of responsibility, particularly the United Nations, NATO, the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) and the Commonwealth of Independent States. The presence of the Secretaries General of NATO and the CSTO as guests and speakers at the Conference today is highly significant in this regard. Constructive co-operation by international and regional security players, particularly those with genuinely powerful potential, is exceptionally important and necessary.

Allow me to conclude my statement with two questions to the NATO Secretary General, Mr. Fogh Rasmussen.

1. How, in your opinion, are the current international operations using force "for peacekeeping" or, if you wish, "to coerce peace", particularly the actions of the NATO countries, compatible with the norms of international law, especially the relevant resolutions of the United Nations Security Council?
2. What possibilities do you see for the initiative to create a pan-European anti-missile defence system as part of the efforts to build a security community in the OSCE region?

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.