

Delegation of Belarus to the OSCE
Delegation of the Russian Federation to the OSCE
Delegation of Ukraine to the OSCE

**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE DELEGATIONS OF
THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS, THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION
AND UKRAINE AT THE 607th MEETING OF
THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

4 May 2006

**Regarding the twentieth anniversary of the accident at the Chernobyl
nuclear power plant**

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour of delivering this statement on behalf of the delegations of the Republic of Belarus, the Russian Federation and Ukraine.

The 26th of April has forever been inscribed in the history of mankind as the date of the worst man-made radiation disaster — the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant. That event shook the world and forever changed the lives of millions of people. During the 20 years that have elapsed since then, the governments of the three countries that suffered most — Ukraine, Belarus and Russia — along with the international community have spent tens of billions of dollars in an effort to overcome the devastating consequences of the accident. Although considerable efforts are still being undertaken today, Chernobyl remains a potential source of danger in the centre of Europe.

Because we are aware of the unprecedented nature of the consequences of the accident at Chernobyl and their effects on many generations, and because we wish to honour the memory of those who perished or whose health has suffered as a result of the Chernobyl disaster, our countries are determined to remember the victims of Chernobyl, to help those who continue to be confronted by the aftermath of this tragedy and to give them a chance to live a normal life with hope for the future. We are also ready to work tirelessly to inculcate a new environmental awareness and to involve our populations in seeking out the best ways of managing the existing radiological risks and regenerating the affected regions.

These are the tasks on our agenda today, and success in carrying them out will directly depend on the active involvement of the entire global community. The first steps in that direction have already been taken. For example, there has been widespread support for the proposal to have the United Nations proclaim the period 2006–2016 a “Decade of the recovery and sustainable development of the regions affected by the disaster at the Chernobyl

nuclear power plant”, an initiative that will make it possible in the long term to establish favourable foreign policy conditions for the comprehensive socio-economic recovery and development of the regions affected.

Mr. Chairman,

We welcome the OSCE Ministerial Declaration on the 20th Anniversary of the Disaster at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant, which was adopted in Ljubljana in 2005, which represents our Organization’s first document on this subject and which provides a new point of departure for stepping up our joint efforts.

We believe that this Declaration has laid the foundations for the future activities of the OSCE in this area. Along those lines, we are counting on the Organization to move actively in the following areas:

- The mobilization of efforts on the part of States, international organizations and financial institutions to carry out projects aimed at dealing with the natural and man-made consequences of the Chernobyl disaster in the countries most affected;
- The encouraging of compliance with all international obligations to ensure nuclear safety, in particular the 1995 Ottawa Memorandum;
- Assistance in enlisting scientific and technical know-how in dealing with the problem of enhancing the security of the “sarcophagus”;
- Participation in specific projects aimed at the economic, environmental and social recovery of the territories affected;
- Support for the dissemination of objective information on the causes and consequences of the Chernobyl accident, on the progress in dealing with them and on associated challenges;
- Elaboration of unified approaches dealing with the prevention of and response to man-made disasters and with the steps needed to overcome their consequences.

Mr. Chairman,

The global scale of the Chernobyl tragedy recognizes no national borders, in the same way that these borders are not recognized by the effects of the radiation on the health of the citizens and the environment of the countries affected. Taking this into account, we believe it is symbolic that both the subject of the Chernobyl disaster and the United Nations “Alliance of Civilizations” initiative have been placed on the agenda of today’s meeting of the Permanent Council. After all, it is not only assistance in promoting mutual understanding among different cultures but also the efforts to deal with the global challenges to human civilization, like the Chernobyl accident, that require our common efforts.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.