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**STATEMENT BY MR. ALYAKSANDR SYCHOV,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS
TO THE OSCE, AT THE MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

7 April 2011

**In response to the report by Ms. Maria Grazia Giammarinaro,
OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking
in Human Beings**

Mr. Chairperson,

Our delegation also welcomes Ms. Maria Grazia Giammarinaro, OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, to this meeting of the Permanent Council. We have listened carefully to her informative statement and studied the written report circulated by her and the programme of activities of the office of the Special Representative for 2011.

We agree with Ms. Giammarinaro's assertion that over the last decade the participating States have taken a serious approach to the drafting of international commitments to combat trafficking in human beings and to the adoption of the relevant national laws. Belarus has made, and continues to make, a significant contribution to this process.

At the same time, it must be recognized that despite considerable concerted efforts to counter trafficking, modern-day slavery continues to "flourish", yielding criminal proceeds worth billions and simultaneously ruining people's lives and future.

This being the case, we must continuously analyse and improve all the existing mechanisms for combating trafficking in human beings so that they work more effectively.

We share the Special Representative's view that trafficking in human beings cannot be overcome without effective measures in the socio-economic sphere. First and foremost, this involves combating poverty, illegal migration, unemployment, corruption and money-laundering. It is important that more attention be paid by governments to gender policy and child protection. A comprehensive interdisciplinary approach to countering trafficking is crucial here.

The development of effective co-operation among the competent law enforcement authorities in our countries remains a fundamental aspect in combating trafficking in human beings.

As for the work of the OSCE and other international organizations involved in combating trafficking, we continue to advocate further co-ordination in this work, both among the various specialized international agencies and within the OSCE itself.

Co-operation within the United Nations system is of paramount importance if anti-trafficking efforts are to be successful. We are counting on the OSCE's active involvement in the implementation of the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly last summer, and the Palermo Protocol of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

As one of the initiators and drafters of the Global Plan of Action, Belarus has repeatedly pointed out that the OSCE could formulate proposals for participation in this mechanism and make a significant contribution to the implementation of the aforementioned document in this way.

We also believe it important to continue the OSCE's co-operation with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime within the framework of the United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking.

The Alliance against Trafficking in Persons chaired by Ms. Giammarinaro is clearly an excellent platform for anti-trafficking work.

In conclusion, I should like to assure you that the Republic of Belarus takes a serious and responsible approach to its international commitments in combating trafficking in human beings and is doing all it can to counter trafficking at the national and international level. The office of the Special Representative can always count on us as a reliable partner. We are interested in continuing to work closely with the OSCE to implement international anti-trafficking projects and events, making the most of the opportunities afforded by the international centre for combating illegal migration and trafficking in human beings in Minsk at the Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Belarus.

We should like to wish you, Ms. Giammarinaro, and your team every success in your work in the future.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.