



PERMANENT DELEGATION OF NORWAY
TO THE OSCE

STATEMENT WITH REGARDS TO
RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN BELARUS

Delivered by Ambassador Anne-Kirsti Karlsen at the Permanent Council
Vienna, 20 May 2021

Madame Chair,

Norway fully aligns with the joint statement delivered on behalf of a group of participating states earlier, but allow me to add the following in our national capacity.

We note with grave concern that the room for independent voices in Belarus is further reduced, from an already regrettable state. The actions taken against the media portal tut.by are disproportional and cannot be justified by the alleged violations of tax evasions. Without an independent media, trustworthy information is not available for the people of Belarus. We strongly urge the authorities of Belarus to reverse the actions taken and adhere to the commitments to freedom of information the country has freely signed up to.

We would also bring attention to the court case against Ms. Maryia Kalesnikava, who risks up to twelve years in prison. Her alleged crimes cannot be seen as anything other than regular political activities, something that should not only be allowed, but applauded. There is no democracy unless real, independent opposition is allowed to function freely.

Thank you

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