



STATEMENT ON RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN BELARUS

Delivered by Minister Counsellor Henning Hj. Johansen at the Permanent Council
Vienna, 4 February 2021

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr. Chair,

Six months have passed since ordinary citizens of Belarus took to the streets to speak out against the fraudulent presidential elections on the 9th of August. Their call for talks were met by excessive violence and the Belarusian authorities have not shown any readiness to engage in real dialogue. Instead, while the peaceful protests have kept going, the Belarusian authorities have only responded with continued brutality and restrictions. This indifference towards fundamental human rights and freedoms is disturbing.

As an OSCE participating state, Belarus has committed itself to work towards democracy, rule of law and human rights. We, thus, remain deeply disappointed by the refusal of the Belarusian authorities to engage in dialogue with representatives of the Belarusian people. This despite the offers by the OSCE Chair for assistance in facilitating such dialogue.

If the Belarusian authorities do believe their main task is to safeguard the wellbeing of the Belarusian people, they must end the violence and use of force, and engage with the broader society and opposition in finding a peaceful and democratic solution to the current crisis.

Thank you

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