

PC.DEL/668/12
5 July 2012

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

Delegation of Belarus

**STATEMENT BY
THE PERMANENT DELEGATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS
TO THE OSCE AT THE 919th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

5 July 2012

In response to the statements by the European Union and Norway

Madam Chairperson,

We have listened carefully to the statements by the delegations of Cyprus (on behalf of the European Union) and Norway and shall bring the points made in them to the attention of our capital.

Once again we note an attempt at artificially drawing attention to isolated events and court rulings in Belarus and their exaggerated politicization at a time when there are far more serious and worrying processes in the OSCE region, which should rather be the subject of discussions at meetings of the Permanent Council of our Organization.

Unfortunately, the practice of making statements of this kind has nothing in common with the principles of respectful dialogue and constructive co-operation. Moreover, our partners continue to believe that they can ignore the principles of the rule of law and independence of the courts, calling into question the rulings of the national courts of other participating States without having any grounds for doing so.

We should like to underscore that the situation in Belarus is completely different to the distorted picture painted by some of our partners.

As for some of the specific issues mentioned in the statements we have just heard, we should like to provide the following information.

Criminal proceedings have indeed been instituted against the Belarusian citizen Andrzej Poczobut, who is charged with defaming the President of the Republic of Belarus. The investigation is still ongoing. Mr. Poczobut is now a free man, having signed a document agreeing not to leave the city. We should like to point out that many Member States of the European Union have provision for criminal liability for defamation of the highest officials.

As for the forthcoming parliamentary elections scheduled to be held in Belarus this autumn, we should like to assure you that the national authorities will do their utmost to

ensure that they take place in a truly democratic, open and transparent manner fully in accordance with the national laws and international commitments of the Republic of Belarus, including its OSCE commitments. Belarus will soon be sending out invitations to international observers, including observers from the OSCE.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.