



United States Mission to the OSCE

On the Death of a Former OSCE Colleague

As delivered by Chargé d'Affaires Katherine Brucker
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
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I would like to take a moment to remember a former OSCE colleague, Dzianis Sidarenka, who died June 23 under circumstances that are unclear and very troubling.

Dzianis was my colleague when we served here in the early 2000s. At the time the table started with Albania, so instead of our sitting across from Belarus as we do today, Dzianis was just a few chairs down to my right. He was a junior diplomat – on his first or at most his second assignment. While in Vienna he became a father. I remember him as an extremely bright, kind person, a gifted linguist, and a very faithful and effective representative of his country – then also under difficult circumstances. The delegation was small, and Dzianis seemed to cover just about every portfolio. We worked closely together on the Economic and Environmental Dimension and on Counter Terrorism. He was everything one could wish for in a colleague. It was abundantly clear that he had great promise.

Dzianis returned to the OSCE some years later as the Belarusian Deputy, and also dealt with the OSCE from the MFA in Minsk.

As many in this room have heard, Dzianis died – reportedly by suicide – June 23 following intense interrogation and polygraph tests administered by the Belarusian KGB following his return to Minsk upon completion of eight years in Berlin as Ambassador to Germany. There are reports his body showed signs of torture. Dzianis leaves behind two children.

I was deeply saddened by this news. Dzianis was a terrific person and a talented diplomat who served his country for over twenty years. We might never know the true circumstances surrounding Dzianis' death, but one thing is certain: Dzianis Sidarenka was taken from us too soon.

I hope we can find an appropriate way to honor Dzianis' memory and service. His life has been extinguished, but we – his former colleagues and friends – should keep his memory alive.

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