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Delegation of Belarus

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

1 March 2012

**In response to the statements by the European Union,
the United States of America and Norway**

Mr. Chairperson,

We have listened attentively to the statements by the delegation of Denmark on behalf of the European Union, the United States of America, Norway, and by Russia, which we shall bring to the attention of our capital.

The imposition by the European Union on 27 February 2012 of various sanctions against Belarus in violation of OSCE principles and commitments, which in itself should be a subject for consideration within our Organization, has obliged Belarus to take appropriate reactive measures.

The Press Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a statement that our delegation distributed within the OSCE on 28 February 2012 in which he stated (I quote):

“The EU Council decision demonstrates that the European Union continues its policy of undisguised pressure. We have repeatedly explained at every level that such policies in relations with the Republic of Belarus would not have any prospects.

In response, Belarus will ban from entering the country those persons from the EU Member States who contributed to the introduction of the sanctions against Belarus.

The permanent representative of Belarus to the European Union and the ambassador of Belarus to Poland have been recalled to Minsk for consultations.

The head of the EU delegation to the Republic of Belarus and the ambassador of Poland to Belarus have also received recommendations to return to their capitals for consultations and to convey to their leadership the firm position of the Belarusian side on the inadmissibility of pressure and sanctions.

If the pressure on the Republic of Belarus persists, other measures will be taken to protect our interests.

We hope that the authorities of the EU and its Member States will realize that this path is flawed.” (End of quote).

Mr. Chairperson,

The reaction of the European Union to the proposal by Belarus for the ambassadors of the EU headquarters and Poland to hold a round of consultations and the decision to recall the European Union ambassadors from Belarus is seen in Minsk as a sign that “Brussels has chosen the way of escalating the tension”.

Commenting on this decision, the official representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Belarus stated (I quote):

“This is the way to a deadlock.

Official Brussels, as well as the capitals of the EU Member States should not forget that tactics of intimidation do not work with Belarus. It is impossible to normalize relations with unilaterally imposed conditions, conditions of coercive pressure.

A constructive result can only be achieved by respectful dialogue on mutually acceptable terms. We hope our partners will understand this.” (End of quote).

Regarding the statement by the United States delegation, we should like to reply by pointing out that on 25 February 2012 the Belarusian citizen Syarhei Kavalenka was found guilty by Vitebsk Pervomaïsk district court of violating parole restrictions in accordance with Article 415 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Belarus and was sentenced to imprisonment of two years and one month.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.