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Delegation of Belarus

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

23 June 2011

In response to the statement by the European Union on Belarus

Mr. Chairperson,

Our delegation has listened carefully to the statement by the delegation of Hungary on behalf of the European Union (EU). The points made in that statement will be brought to the attention of our government in Minsk.

By way of response, I should like to present the comments by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Belarus regarding the decision of the Council of the European Union of 20 June 2011.

I quote: "The decision adopted casts doubt on the ability of the Council of the European Union to properly assess the situation and to take steps towards constructive dialogue aimed at finding rational solutions.

It is evident that the European policy is prisoner to illusions and misconceptions about the real state of affairs in our country. The European Union is attempting to speak to Belarus from a position of power and economic sanctions that are in fact directed against the interests of ordinary people.

In these circumstances we recall that the sanction approach had already shown itself to be ineffective last century.

We are convinced that the existing problems may be solved only through open and equal dialogue.

It is evident that at the present time the EU's actions are intensifying confrontation and making it difficult to proceed to normal co-operation.

Belarus will take appropriate steps to protect the legitimate interests of its citizens and businesses, including measures in response to the initiators of this decision." End of quote.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.