



**PERMANENT DELEGATION
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE**

**STATEMENT ON AMENDMENTS OF RESTRICTIVE MEASURES WITH
REGARD TO BELARUS**

As delivered by Ambassador Robert Kvile
to the Permanent Council,
Vienna, 18 February 2016

Mr Chairman,

I take this opportunity to inform the Permanent Council that Norway will amend its restrictive measures with regard to Belarus in a manner parallel to the decision adopted earlier this week by the European Union.

We do this in response to some positive steps taken recently by Belarusian authorities, notably the release of political prisoners last August. Likewise, we welcome the resumption of the EU-Belarus Human Rights Dialogue.

Mr Chairman,

While I have the floor I would like to emphasize that we remain concerned about the human rights situation in Belarus. Significant shortcomings remain with regard to the respect for fundamental rights and freedoms, democracy and the rule of law. Of particular concern is the continued application of the death penalty, including the most recent death sentence, passed earlier this week.

Thank you.