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**STATEMENT BY MR. ROMAN ROMANOVSKY,
DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF
BELARUS TO THE OSCE, AT THE CONCLUDING MEETING OF
THE 21st OSCE ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM**

Prague, 11 to 13 September 2013

**Increasing stability and security: Improving the environmental footprint of
energy-related activities in the OSCE region**

Opening plenary session

Mr. Chairperson,

Belarus regards the OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum as one of the key events of our Organization. We are in favour of further improving the Forum's work, increasing the practical benefits of its activities and strengthening the OSCE's second basket in general. We trust that the Helsinki+40 process that has begun within the OSCE, a creative and decisive approach on the part of the OSCE Chairmanships from 2013 to 2015, will help to achieve these lofty goals.

Since socio-economic development, environmental protection and energy security directly affect daily life and human well-being, additional efforts by the OSCE in this regard will be extremely useful, especially at a time of financial and economic crisis. The future, stability and security of our region will depend on how effectively we resolve economic and environmental security issues. Our Organization could make a more tangible contribution to this work.

This year, the events of the OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum are devoted to what we believe to be a most relevant topic of the utmost importance. On the one hand, the OSCE continues to pay increased attention to energy security, energy efficiency and the protection of energy infrastructure. It is difficult to overestimate the importance of these issues and we wholeheartedly support the focus on these problems. On the other hand, we do not overlook the impact of modern economic development on the environment and are engaged in discussions on the transition to environmentally friendly technologies.

Our approaches to the theme of the current Economic and Environmental Forum were clearly reflected in the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly resolutions adopted on Belarus's initiative: on the promotion and use of new and renewable sources of energy in 2012, and on co-operation on the transition to a green economy in the context of sustainable development

in 2013. We believe that these two documents have made a serious contribution in terms of the substance of the agenda of the OSCE's economic and environmental basket.

We support the Ukrainian OSCE Chairmanship's intention to raise the profile of the second dimension of our Organization and its plans to adopt recommendations at the Kyiv Ministerial Council on further OSCE involvement in energy issues in the context of environmental security.

We believe that such a decision is necessary, not only to ensure the continuation of dialogue on renewable energy sources, energy efficiency and new technologies, but also to encourage concrete action in these areas at a national and regional level. Such steps could involve promoting the introduction of new green technologies and improving the adoption of decisions on environmental protection issues.

We hope that the results of our work during the entire cycle of events within the 21st Economic and Environmental Forum will make it possible to arrive at specific, useful decisions by the end of the year.

We thank our Czech colleagues for their hospitality and for organizing today's event, and the Ukrainian Chairmanship and the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities for the substantive content of this meeting. We wish all the participants a successful meeting.

Thank you for your attention.