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**STATEMENT BY THE PERMANENT DELEGATION OF THE
REPUBLIC OF BELARUS TO THE OSCE AT THE 947th MEETING OF
THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

11 April 2013

Regarding the situation in respect of the prison at Guantánamo Bay

Mr. Chairperson,

We share the concern voiced by the permanent representative of Russia regarding the situation in respect of the prison at Guantánamo. As you are aware, our delegation has repeatedly raised this issue at meetings of the Permanent Council. Unfortunately, despite assurances by the United States at the highest level, this prison facility continues to operate and the rights of the persons confined there continue to be violated. An act of desperation, namely the protest hunger strike by a group of Guantánamo prisoners, was a direct consequence of this fact.

We fully agree with the opinion expressed by Ms. Navi Pillay, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, in a special statement released on 5 April noting that the continuing indefinite imprisonment of persons without charging them and bringing them to trial constitutes a direct violation of international law. We support her demand on the United States authorities to shut down immediately the prison at Guantánamo.

We also call on the United States Government to co-operate fully with the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) in organizing a visit by ODIHR experts to that facility and in enabling them to observe the extrajudicial practices occurring there.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.