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**STATEMENT BY THE PERMANENT DELEGATION OF THE
REPUBLIC OF BELARUS TO THE OSCE AT THE 948th MEETING
OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

18 April 2013

**In response to the address by the Executive Director of the
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime**

Madam Chairperson,

We join in welcoming Ambassador Yury Fedotov, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna, and thank him for his interesting and informative presentation.

There is no doubt that terrorism, organized crime, trafficking in human beings, drug trafficking, corruption and cybercrime are some of the most serious threats to security today. The UNODC and OSCE are called upon to engage on a daily basis in finding responses to these challenges of the modern age. In that context, it is difficult to overestimate the importance of developing close co-operation between our two organizations and of ensuring that their work is co-ordinated. We regard the biennial joint action plan, which allows the synchronization of our activities and also prevents unnecessary duplication, as a key instrument in this co-operation.

Madam Chairperson,

We should like to dwell briefly on three areas in which the mandates of the UNODC and the OSCE overlap: the fight against illicit drug trafficking, corruption and trafficking in human beings.

Last year for the first time the OSCE adopted the Concept for Combating the Threat of Illicit Drugs and the Diversion of Chemical Precursors. It is a systematic framework document defining the basic thrusts of our future efforts in this area. It is now important to concentrate on its progressive implementation. We believe that the OSCE and its participating States could make more active use in this regard of the UNODC's expertise and potential.

Within the OSCE's second basket, the fight against corruption is one of the principal and traditional priorities in the Organization's work. Back in 2004 a decision was adopted at the initiative of Belarus on supporting the ratification in the OSCE region of the United Nations Convention against Corruption. This topic was also given special attention in

the Ministerial Declaration on Strengthening Good Governance adopted at the Ministerial Council meeting in Dublin in 2012.

Belarus regards combating trafficking in human beings as one of the key areas of co-operation between the UNODC and the OSCE.

We welcome the practical steps taken by the UNODC to strengthen national potential in the fight against trafficking in human beings, particularly in connection with the implementation of the United Nations Global Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons initiated by Belarus.

This universal document has given vital impetus to international efforts to combat trafficking and has stimulated the process of accession by States to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons. Among the most significant results of the adoption of the Global Plan of Action were possibly the preparation by the UNODC in 2012 of the Global Report on Trafficking in Persons, the establishment under its auspices of the Voluntary Trust Fund for Victims of Human Trafficking and the formation of a Group of Friends United against Human Trafficking on international platforms in New York, Vienna and Geneva.

A high-level United Nations General Assembly meeting is planned in New York for 13 May 2013 to review the progress made in implementing the Global Plan of Action. We believe that it is important that not only the UNODC but also the OSCE is represented at this event at the appropriate level and contributes to the global discussion.

Madam Chairperson,

In our opinion, in view of the new developments in trafficking today the OSCE Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings of 2003 needs to be brought up-to-date or supplemented. We hope that we will be able to arrive at specific drafts in time for the OSCE Ministerial Council meeting in Kyiv. We are sure that the two major OSCE anti-trafficking conferences in Kyiv and Vienna in June this year will be helpful in this regard.

We should also like to draw attention to the seminar for representatives of law enforcement bodies of the member States of the Group of Friends United against Human Trafficking to be held in Minsk on 29 and 30 May 2013. It is a great honour for us that this seminar coincides with the visit to the Republic of Belarus of Ambassador Yury Fedotov, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna. It is gratifying that active support in the preparation for this seminar is also being provided by the OSCE, which will be represented by its deputy Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings.

We hope that the planned visit by the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to Minsk will give an additional impetus to the development of the programmatic activities of the UNODC in Belarus in all areas of its competence.

In conclusion, allow us to wish the distinguished Ambassador Fedotov every success in his work in this important and responsible position.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.