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Delegation of Belarus

**STATEMENT BY THE PERMANENT DELEGATION OF THE
REPUBLIC OF BELARUS TO THE OSCE AT THE 1335th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

16 September 2021

In response to the address by the President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

We welcome you, Ms. Cederfelt, and the submission of your first report to the Permanent Council as President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. Having taken note of your statement, we should like to share a few thoughts.

We could not help but notice that a critical assessment of the situation in Belarus occupies a prominent place on the scale of priorities in your report. One should not be so categorical and biased in judging the course of events in my country. Closer contact and exchange of information with the Belarusian parliamentary delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and a clearer understanding of the root causes of the processes you have mentioned would facilitate a realistic assessment of the situation in Belarus.

During the discussions on your predecessor's reports to the Permanent Council, a number of participating States, including Belarus, argued in favour of heightening the relevance of the Parliamentary Assembly as a platform for mutually respectful dialogue aimed at reconciling differences and aligning our countries' positions regarding the most pressing security issues in all three "baskets".

Unfortunately, the most recent summer session of the Assembly in Vienna demonstrated the continued distrust and the growing intensity of confrontational rhetoric. We consider the adoption in Vienna of a number of "urgent" country-specific resolutions directed against Belarus and the Russian Federation to be a stain on the unifying role of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

This environment is clearly not conducive to effective work by our parliamentarians to develop viable responses to the truly significant challenges in the OSCE area, such as international terrorism and organized crime, neo-Nazism, trafficking in human beings, corruption and the consequences of the pandemic.

In our view, it is your primary role to restore an atmosphere of parliamentary solidarity aimed at overcoming these challenges as quickly as possible.

We take this opportunity to urge you not to allow a repeat of the shameful incident that occurred during the summer session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, when the head of the Belarusian

delegation was denied a visa, which prevented him from participating fully in the work of this key event of the Assembly.

We believe that the policy of imposing sanctions against parliamentarians poses a challenge to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, and that it is also detrimental to the norms of interparliamentary co-operation as a whole.

We also consider the sanctions policy of a number of OSCE participating States in relation to Belarus to be inconsistent with OSCE principles, which should be a matter of concern to all OSCE Parliamentary Assembly members.

I will respond under the relevant current issue to those delegations that have chosen to exploit the topic of Belarus under the present agenda item instead of seeking common approaches to strengthening interparliamentary co-operation.

In closing, we should like to recall the value of each OSCE participating State in the light of the principle of common and indivisible security.