

PC.DEL/1171/10  
23 December 2010

ENGLISH only



**PERMANENT DELEGATION  
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE**

STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION IN BELARUS  
As delivered by Acting Representative of Norway Lars Løberg  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
23 December 2010

**Mr. Chairman,**

Allow me to quote the Norwegian Foreign Minister, His Excellency Mr. Jonas Gahr Støre's comments on the election in Belarus:

“It is deeply regrettable that the presidential election in Belarus does not appear to have been free and democratic. I condemn the use of violence against demonstrators and the arrests of opposition leaders, journalists and civil society representatives,”

“Belarus must fulfill its international obligations with regard to human rights and democracy. The brutal manner in which the protests following the election have been dealt with is totally unacceptable. The country's authorities have a particular responsibility to make sure that presidential candidates can carry out their political activities without any risk to their personal safety. It is cause for great concern that a number of presidential candidates have reportedly been arrested. They must be released immediately,”

“We would all like to see Belarus fully integrated into Europe. But if that is to happen, the country's authorities must respect fundamental norms of human rights and democracy,”

**Thank you, Mr. Chairman**