

Delegation of Belarus

**STATEMENT BY
THE PERMANENT DELEGATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS
TO THE OSCE AT THE 957th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

27 June 2013

**In response to the address by Mr. Sergey Lebedev,
Chairman of the Executive Committee and Executive Secretary of the
Commonwealth of Independent States**

Mr. Chairperson,

We welcome Mr. Sergey Nikolayevich Lebedev, Chairman of the Executive Committee and Executive Secretary of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), to this meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council and thank him for his interesting and informative presentation on the activities of the CIS with a focus on areas of common interest and possible co-operation between the Commonwealth and the OSCE.

The Republic of Belarus is chairing the CIS this year. The motto of the Belarusian Chairmanship, as already mentioned by Sergey Nikolayevich, is “Integration for the benefit of the individual: strengthening good-neighbourliness, developing economic co-operation, promoting the availability of green technologies and expanding a dialogue of cultures”.

This motto is in many respects consonant with the goals and tasks that we have set ourselves and are endeavouring to achieve within the OSCE, among other things within the Helsinki+40 process, namely forming an indivisible security community, increasing trust and expanding co-operation among States, creating conditions for economic prosperity and social stability, and ensuring a dignified life and the possibility of self-realization for the citizens of our countries.

One of the priorities of the Belarusian Chairmanship of the CIS is to expand the Commonwealth’s co-operation with other international partners, including the OSCE, in the interests of co-ordinating activities to resolve current security and co-operation issues. In that regard, we note the similarity of key areas of work by the CIS and the OSCE in combating transnational threats and challenges, in the economic and environmental dimension and in terms of humanitarian co-operation.

It is likely that our organizations could work together more closely and pool their efforts in countering cross-border threats to security. In particular, this relates to the fight

against organized crime, trafficking in narcotic drugs and human beings as well as threats emanating from the territory of Afghanistan, especially since at Belarus's suggestion heightened attention is being paid in the CIS this year to putting an end to unlawful activities across the external borders of Member States of the Commonwealth.

As in the OSCE, considerable importance is attached in the CIS to economic and environmental issues. The priorities of the Belarusian Chairmanship of the CIS in this regard include increasing the effectiveness of co-operation in the implementation of joint economic, investment and innovative projects and also strengthening and developing a free trade zone. Optimum utilization of transit potential, promotion of green technologies, co-operation in preventing and dealing with natural and man-made emergencies, and the development of renewable energy sources are in our view all areas for possible co-operation between the OSCE and the CIS.

As for humanitarian problems, the Belarusian Chairmanship of the CIS proposed that in 2013 the focus should be on such issues as the development of the information space and the strengthening of intercultural and inter-ethnic co-operation. We believe that both these topics are extremely relevant for the OSCE as well.

Election observation is undoubtedly an important and visible area of co-operation between the two organizations. We believe it useful to continue and intensify this co-operation. In that connection, it is no secret that the assessments of the same elections by the CIS and the OSCE frequently differ considerably. We agree that one reason for this is the absence of uniform rules for observation and criteria for the assessment of elections, and we advocate their development as soon as possible.

Mr. Chairperson,

It is clear to us that the CIS and the OSCE can and should intensify their dialogue and increase their constructive co-operation. We are confident that there is considerable potential for expanding and deepening such mutually beneficial co-operation, among other things through the implementation of joint projects and common initiatives. Belarus is ready to do all it can to facilitate this process during its CIS Chairmanship.

In conclusion, we should like to thank the Ukrainian Chairmanship of the OSCE for inviting the CIS Executive Secretary to this meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council and wish you, Sergey Nikolayevich, continued success in the important and useful work to develop and strengthen the Commonwealth of Independent States in the interests of the prosperity and well-being of the peoples of our countries.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.