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Permanent Delegation of the Republic of Belarus to the OSCE

**STATEMENT BY  
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THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS TO THE OSCE, AT THE MEETING OF  
THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

30 June 2005

**Report of the Panel of Eminent Persons on OSCE Reform**

Mr. Chairman,

Like the previous speakers, I should like, on behalf of the Belarusian delegation, to thank Ambassador Frlec, the representative of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, and all the members of the Panel of Eminent Persons for the comprehensive report presented to us today on strengthening the effectiveness of the OSCE.

We should also like to add our condolences at the death of one of the members of the Panel of Eminent Persons, the Russian representative Mr. Nikolay Afanasievsky.

The Republic of Belarus regards the issue of reforming the OSCE, strengthening its effectiveness and adapting it to the new international realities and challenges as the main question on the Organization's agenda at the present time.

Indeed, it was with this in mind that our country signed the joint documents adopted by a number of the member States of the Commonwealth of Independent States in Moscow and Astana in 2004.

In the absence of candid dialogue and the search for answers to the questions facing the OSCE today, we believe the Organization's future to be very uncertain.

In that connection, the establishment of the Panel of Eminent Persons in accordance with the decision of the OSCE Ministerial Council in Sofia was an important step towards the initiation of this dialogue.

The report prepared by the Panel of Eminent Persons by and large meets our expectations. It contains a number of important and interesting proposals and recommendations, and also creates a general framework for further work on the comprehensive reform of the OSCE.

The focus of attention on the role and place of the OSCE in the European security architecture and on ways of strengthening comprehensive security and the structural reform of the Organization seem justified to us and will make it possible to begin an objective discussion of both substantive and structural questions concerning the work of the OSCE.

At this preliminary stage, we should like to mention that we share many of the views expressed in the report and particularly agree with its basic finding as regards the need to increase the awareness among all the OSCE participating States of our common goals.

Some of the report's recommendations, especially those concerning the substantial reform of the structure of OSCE bodies, warrant detailed discussion, and we are ready to play an active part in these discussions and to present our own views.

We believe that the effectiveness of the reform process will largely depend on the way in which the recommendations made in the report by the Panel of Eminent Persons are examined in the run-up to the OSCE Ministerial Council in Ljubljana and on whether national contributions are taken into account.

As stipulated by the Sofia decision, the forthcoming High-Level OSCE Consultations must play a central role here.

In that connection, we are awaiting specific proposals from the Chairmanship very soon regarding the modalities and priorities for further work on the report.

It is important to arrive at specific decisions that could already be approved at the forthcoming OSCE Ministerial Council in Ljubljana. We also believe that a number of key issues, such as the possible adoption of an OSCE statute or charter, may require the holding of an OSCE summit in the near future.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.