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**STATEMENT BY MR. ANVAR AZIMOV,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

3 February 2011

Regarding the sanctions imposed on Belarus

Mr. Chairperson,

In connection with the issues raised today by the European Union and the United States of America regarding the introduction of sanctions against Belarus and its leaders, we should like to express our views on this subject.

Russia takes the view that unilateral sanctions which are actually aimed at worsening the socio-economic situation in Belarus are counter-productive. We are convinced that the problems with regard to Belarus must be solved by means of a dialogue, which would draw Belarus into multilateral processes, thus helping to promote economic reforms and strengthen democracy in Belarus.

This would contribute to the implementation of the strategic goal proclaimed at the OSCE Summit in Astana of shaping a common and indivisible Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security community, free of dividing lines and zones with different levels of security.

Thank you for your attention.