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Delegation of Belarus

**STATEMENT BY MR. ALYAKSANDR SYCHOV,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS
TO THE OSCE, AT THE MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

2 June 2011

**In response to the statements by the European Union and the
United States of America**

Mr. Chairperson,

We have listened carefully to the statements by the distinguished delegation of Hungary on behalf of the European Union (EU) and by the distinguished delegation of the United States. The points raised in these statements will be brought to the attention of our government in Minsk.

We are unfortunately forced to note the continuing practice of political assessments by the EU and the United States of court rulings in other OSCE participating States. What is surprising in this connection is that these assessments are based not on official information and facts but on certain “alternative sources”, “views” and unsubstantiated assertions. Instead of taking a balanced approach to a particular question, our Western partners stubbornly continue to inflame the situation. As we have said before on many occasions, this kind of behaviour will lead to nothing good in the OSCE.

In responding to the statements we have heard today, permit me to recall that the process for the assessment by the courts of the events of 19 December 2010 in Minsk is continuing in Belarus, including the procedure for appealing against sentences that have already been handed down. All the relevant provisions of the laws of the Republic of Belarus are being observed in this connection.

As for the statement by the President of the United States regarding Belarus, we should like to cite the following comments by the Belarusian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The following is a direct quotation:

“The statement by US President Barack Obama of 27 May 2011 on Belarus is neither justified nor based on true facts.

Once again the US side is talking about stepping up sanctions, even though, drawing on its own experience in relations with several countries, the United States should be well aware that the policy of sanctions does not work.

How can one consider the introduction of sanctions against State enterprises, considering that they provide employment for a significant portion of the Belarusian population and that they make a major contribution to the national budget – in such areas as health, social security, pensions and education? This being the case, against whom in reality are these sanctions directed? This simple comparison of what is declared and what is true points up the hypocrisy of the claims regarding ‘support for the Belarusian people’.

We are convinced of the importance of collaboration between Belarus and the US. The United States should find within itself the strength to desist from false stereotypes and obsolete approaches.

It is high time to embark on constructive co-operation in the genuine interests of our nations. We have always been ready for this and continue to be even now.”

I believe that the final paragraph of the comments by the Belarusian Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding the statement by the President of the United States fully applies also to our partners in the European Union.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.