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Delegation of Belarus

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

22 June 2011

**In response to the statement by
His Excellency Eamon Gilmore, Deputy Prime Minister and
Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade of Ireland**

Mr. Chairperson,

The delegation of Belarus welcomes His Excellency Eamon Gilmore, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade of Ireland, to the meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council and thanks him for his informative statement outlining his approaches to the OSCE's activities as well as an overall vision for the Irish Chairmanship in 2012.

Mr. Chairperson,

I cannot fail to mention that 22 June is a significant historical date. On this day, fascist Germany invaded the Soviet Union. The Great Patriotic War was an extremely severe trial for Belarus and for the other nations of the Soviet Union. We remember the price we paid for victory. One in three Belarusians died in the Great Patriotic War. In this context we must not only keep the historical truth alive, but must also strive to unite our efforts to maintain international peace and security.

Mr. Chairperson,

After last year's summit in Astana, the OSCE, which is one of the key international security organizations in the Euro-Atlantic area, is now going through a significant, in many ways crucial, stage of its development. The future of our common Organization depends on whether we can maintain the unity of the participating States, focus on the unifying strategic goal of creating a security community without dividing lines, and adapt the OSCE to the new threats and challenges.

We are convinced that the concept of comprehensive, indivisible and co-operative security and decision-making based on consensus must remain the foundation of the OSCE's activities.

In this regard, an inclusive and balanced approach to the Organization's work is necessary in terms of geography and across all three dimensions. In our view, attention should be paid as a matter of priority to countering transnational threats and challenges.

Other Belarusian priorities within the OSCE include improving confidence- and security-building measures, including the Vienna Document 1999, enhancing the OSCE's role in the area of energy security, stepping up efforts in combating trafficking in human beings and ensuring freedom of movement. We trust that we shall be able to make significant progress in these areas before the Ministerial Council meeting in Vilnius. We hope that these topics will also be given due consideration in one way or another in the agenda for the Irish Chairmanship in 2012.

We are also convinced that it is necessary to complete the process of transforming the OSCE into a fully fledged international organization with its own charter and legal capacity in the very near future. It is important to continue the work on improving the executive structures of the OSCE, including the development and adoption by consensus of unified rules for the observation and assessment of elections by our Organization. Suggestions on this topic by a number of participating States, including the Republic of Belarus, have been on the negotiating table for a long time now.

The upcoming Ministerial Council meeting in Vilnius will be quite significant in terms of the willingness of our countries to take mutual concerns into account and to seek necessary compromises in the interests of our common security. We trust that the results of the Ministerial Council will lay a sound and reliable foundation for the subsequent efforts of the participating States and the Irish Chairmanship in 2012.

We are sure that Ireland has all the necessary qualities to fulfil the at times extremely difficult function of chairing the OSCE next year in an appropriate way. Minister, we should like to wish you and your talented team in Vienna every success in your preparations and for this worthy mission.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.