



PERMANENT DELEGATION
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE

STATEMENT ON BELARUS

As delivered by Ambassador Robert Kvile
to the Permanent Council,
Vienna, 20 October 2011

Thank you, Mr. Chairman,

Norway shares the concerns expressed by delegations speaking before me as well as by those expressed by the Chairperson-in-Office in his recent letter to Sergei Martynov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus.

The sentences against leading opposition politicians after the presidential elections and the information of possible torture in detention are of great concern. So are amendments to existing laws that will entail yet another step in the wrong direction for rule of law in Belarus. I refer here to the amendments to the Law on Public Organisations and the Law on Mass Events, both recently approved by the Belarusian Parliament. If adopted, these laws would violate the basic rights of the Belarusian people, including that of expression and of assembly.

Norway would advise Belarus to show transparency in the political processes and deems it in the country's best interest to work with the international community in improving the human rights situation for its people.

As a response to the Belarus repression of its own population, Norway will continue to support Belarusian civil society and other democratic forces of the country.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman