

The OSCE Secretariat bears no responsibility for the content of this document and circulates it without altering its content. The distribution by OSCE Conference Services of this document is without prejudice to OSCE decisions, as set out in documents agreed by OSCE participating States.

PC.DEL/485/26  
21 May 2026

ENGLISH  
Original: RUSSIAN

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY  
MR. DMITRY POLYANSKIY, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE  
RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1565th MEETING OF THE  
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

21 May 2026

**On the occasion of the “Day of Solidarity with Political Prisoners in Belarus”**

Mr. Chairperson,

I should like to speak in exercise of my right of reply.

The inclusion of a so-called Day of Solidarity with Political Prisoners in Belarus in the agenda of today’s Permanent Council meeting is a striking example of the ongoing degradation of the OSCE’s third “basket”. As my Belarusian colleague has rightly pointed out just now, this date is not one of the international days established by the United Nations, nor does it emanate from the commitments undertaken at our Organization. Such initiatives have long since turned into a convenient mechanism for relaying one-sided accusations, whipping up political hysteria and promoting biased, short-term opportunistic approaches.

This is a well and truly tried-and-tested pattern for the Brussels bloc and the United Kingdom: lawbreakers are declared “freedom fighters”, criminals become “martyrs” and any law enforcement actions are branded as “brutal repression”. “Days of Solidarity” have essentially become part of a political ritual in which the conclusions are known in advance and the facts are adjusted to fit pre-established templates. And there is no international consensus on this score, however much our Western colleagues may try to portray it as such. There is merely a group of countries that is using the Belarusian issue to promote its confrontational stance.

We have consistently denounced interference in the internal affairs of States and the practice of using human rights rhetoric selectively, that is, only where it suits the geopolitical interests of those who bring it into play.

Those who are criticizing Belarus today would do well to attend first of all to their own problems, namely political censorship, the persecution of dissidents, arbitrary policing and democratic backsliding. There is no shortage of material for a serious discussion – one that our Western colleagues continue to studiously avoid while forgetting that a lecturing tone comes across as absurd and out of place in view of the worsening human rights violations back home.

Thank you for your attention.