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

31 March 2011

**In response to the statement by the Minister for
Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan**

Mr. Chairperson,

We should like to welcome the distinguished Minister for Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan, Mr. Hamrokhon Zarifi, to this meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council and thank him for his interesting statement.

We note with satisfaction that this is already the second recent statement in the Permanent Council by a minister from one of our partner countries under the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). This represents a substantial contribution to the dialogue within the OSCE and attests clearly to the great importance that all the CSTO member countries accord to the OSCE.

Tajikistan is undoubtedly an important participant in our Organization. Its location on the southern borders of the OSCE region makes Tajikistan crucial in ensuring international security and stability on the outer fringes of our Organization, above all in relation to the terrorist and narcotic threats emanating from Afghanistan.

This being so, international co-operation and the necessary assistance for Tajikistan, including through the OSCE, acquire a fundamental significance, with the proviso that such assistance by our Organization must be given on request and be compatible with Tajikistan's own priorities.

Belarus and Tajikistan have long been friends and partners. Our countries work closely together bilaterally and multilaterally on a wide range of issues through the CSTO, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the United Nations. This also fully applies to our co-operation within the framework of the OSCE.

I should like to conclude by wishing the Minister every success in his responsible post and look forward to further mutually beneficial co-operation with our Tajik colleagues in the future.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.