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**STATEMENT BY THE PERMANENT DELEGATION OF THE
REPUBLIC OF BELARUS TO THE OSCE AT THE 944th MEETING OF
THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

14 March 2013

**In response to the address by Mr. Aleksey Meshkov,
Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation**

Mr. Chairperson,

We are pleased to welcome to this meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council Mr. Aleksey Meshkov, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, and we thank him for his exposition of Russia's basic priorities within the OSCE and also within the Group of 20 (G20).

We take the view that statements to the Permanent Council by the G20 presidencies might well become a useful tradition in the light of the importance of developing co-operation between the OSCE and the key international institutions and the need to "feed" our Organization and to see to it that much of its agenda is devoted to topical issues and the global problems to whose solution the OSCE is in a position to make a contribution.

In our view, the establishment of interaction and dialogue with the G20 will primarily work to the benefit of the further development and strengthening of the OSCE's economic and environmental dimension, something that without exception all the delegations at the last meeting of the Permanent Council spoke out in favour of. Specifically, we should like to single out among the subjects that deserve particular attention the problem of the financial and economic crisis, sustainable development, a "green economy" and energy security.

It is also important that this kind of dialogue should be a two-way exercise and should ensure that due consideration is taken, when working out strategic decisions within the G20, of the interests and approaches of the countries of the entire OSCE region.

As far as our "internal kitchen" is concerned, we should like to note that the positions of Belarus and Russia within the OSCE coincide in many ways. We are convinced that the interests of all participating States are best served by a strong and effective organization with its own Charter and with collectively agreed rules of procedure.

We are in favour of reforming the OSCE, including its "third basket", and in that regard we place special hope in the Helsinki+40 process.

We agree with the view of the Russian Government regarding the topicality of the OSCE's efforts in dealing with the problem of combating transnational threats and challenges and the need to strengthen our Organization's first and second dimensions. Work within the context of the human rights "basket" requires a balanced and, as far as possible, depoliticized approach.

We trust that thanks to the efforts of the Ukrainian Chairmanship we shall be able to approach the OSCE Ministerial Council meeting in Kyiv with a realistic set of ministerial decisions that will provide a concrete contribution to the efforts to build a genuine security community in the OSCE region.

In conclusion, permit me, Mr. Minister, to assure you that you can always count on Belarus as a reliable and responsible partner within the OSCE. We should also like to wish you every success in your important government position, good health and prosperity.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.