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**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE
1329th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

12 August 2021

On the situation in the Republic of Belarus

Madam Chairperson,

We strongly condemn any attempts to directly or indirectly interfere in the internal political processes in the Republic of Belarus, which is already subject to illegal Western sanctions and “dirty” information campaigns. It is clear that under the specious excuse of defending democracy, rights and fundamental freedoms, external pressure is being exerted on Belarus using illegitimate instruments of containment. Thus, on 9 August, the United States of America, the United Kingdom and Canada announced new sanctions against the Republic of Belarus, timing them to coincide with the anniversary of the presidential election in that sovereign State and the start of the protests there.

We recall the illegality of any unilateral restrictions bypassing the United Nations Security Council. Such sanctions do nothing to regulate political crises. Those members of the international community who are so concerned about human rights activists would do well to abandon this nefarious practice, which also affects ordinary citizens who are not in the slightest interested in politics. However, they are evidently not the object of the supposed “concern” of Western officials.

We take the view that the Belarusian people alone are entitled to determine the future of their country themselves on the basis of existing national legislation. We are counting on the constitutional reform process that has been launched in the Republic to lead ultimately to a definitive normalization of the situation and put an end to the speculation concerning our brotherly country.

With regard to the migration crisis mentioned here, at the meeting of the Permanent Council on 29 July we already pointed out the need for the international community and the relevant OSCE structures to pay close attention to the repression of migrants in Lithuania and the gross violations by its authorities of the human rights of this vulnerable group.

Thank you for your attention.