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**STATEMENT BY MR. DENIS SIDORENKO,
DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF
BELARUS TO THE OSCE, AT THE JOINT MEETING OF THE OSCE
FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION AND THE
PERMANENT COUNCIL**

26 May 2010

**In response to the presentation by Ms. Rose Gottemoeller,
Assistant Secretary of State of the United States of America, and
Mr. Anatoly Antonov, Director of the Department of Security and
Disarmament Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the
Russian Federation**

Mr. Chairperson,

The delegation of the Republic of Belarus joins in welcoming Ms. Rose Gottemoeller, Assistant Secretary of State of the United States of America, and Mr. Anatoly Antonov, Director of the Department of Security and Disarmament Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, and thanks them for their interesting and informative presentation.

Belarus welcomed the signing by Russia and the United States of the Treaty on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (START) in Prague in April this year, which we believe makes a serious contribution to strengthening strategic security and stability in the world.

We trust that Russia and the United States will endeavour to elaborate effective measures to further reduce offensive weapons. This could help to create an irreversible and multilateral basis for the nuclear disarmament process. The success of disarmament in the future will indeed depend in many ways on these collective efforts by all interested members of the world community.

We are gratified to note the recognition in the Preamble to the new treaty of the contribution by the Republic of Belarus to the process of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, which Ambassador Antonov mentioned. Belarus was the first State to voluntarily renounce nuclear weapons and for many years has been a responsible party to the 1991 Treaty on the Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms.

We assume that Russia and the United States will strictly abide by the security guarantees set forth in the 1994 Budapest Memorandums, which were confirmed in the joint Russian-United States statement of 4 December 2009.

In view of the unique experience gained by Belarus in implementing the 1991 START Treaty and other international agreements on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, we are counting on a continuation of the political dialogue and expert co-operation on this issue by all interested parties.

We hope that the substantial and substantive progress made in nuclear disarmament, particularly the successful conclusion of the Review Conference on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in New York, will also permit significant advances to be made in the area of conventional arms, in particular with respect to the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.