

Permanent Delegation of the Republic of Belarus to the OSCE

**STATEMENT BY
MR. DENIS SIDORENKO, DEPUTY HEAD OF THE
PERMANENT DELEGATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS,
AT THE MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

17 March 2005

With regard to the international conference in Vilnius (Lithuania)

Mr. Chairman,

According to the information available to us, an international conference “on the co-ordination of assistance for the Republic of Belarus” is to be held in Vilnius (Lithuania) on 18 March 2005, and there a policy is to be drawn up outlining various programmes and the provision of financial assistance for the “democratization” of Belarus.

This is a closed conference and official representatives of Belarus have not been invited to participate. At the same time, however, we have learnt that representatives of the Belarusian opposition are to take part in this event.

Faced with these facts, Belarus regards the forthcoming conference as an unfriendly act by the European Union and Lithuania vis-à-vis Belarus.

We regard these activities of the European Commission and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania, who are the organizers of this dubious event, as a clear indication of their unwillingness to engage in a constructive dialogue with Belarus on matters of mutual interest.

It is clear that this kind of approach does nothing to strengthen good-neighbourliness and mutual understanding and contravenes the principles enshrined in the documents of the OSCE and other international organizations.

We should especially like to point out that the financing of any projects on the territory of a sovereign State without its consent and against its will constitutes a violation of the laws of that State.

Belarus considers the holding of any conferences, seminars or other such events of an anti-Belarusian nature to be contrary the policy of “good-neighbourliness” declared by the European Union vis-à-vis Belarus. This is especially true if they are conducted with an

agenda that is closed to the Republic of Belarus and are held without the participation of official Belarusian representatives.

We do not believe that events of this kind are likely to improve the relationship between Belarus and the European Union or to create an atmosphere of mutual understanding between them.

Furthermore, we believe that the involvement of representatives of intergovernmental organizations of which Belarus is a fully fledged member in the aforementioned essentially anti-governmental conference contravenes the spirit of co-operation with our country. In view of this, we should like to express our regret at the involvement in this conference of the head of the OSCE Office in Minsk, Mr. Eberhard Heyken. We would ask the Chairman-in-Office and the Secretary General to explain these arrangements. The Republic of Belarus also thinks that special attention should be given in the context of efforts to reform the field activities of the OSCE missions to the question why representatives of our Organization should be involved in such events.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.