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Canadian Delegation to the  
Organization for Security & Cooperation  
in Europe



Délégation du Canada auprès de  
l'Organisation pour la sécurité et la coopération  
en Europe

**ON BEHALF OF THE DELEGATIONS OF ICELAND, LIECHTENSTEIN,  
NORWAY, SWITZERLAND AND CANADA  
STATEMENT ON BELARUS  
571st MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL  
6 OCTOBER 2005**

I take the floor on behalf of Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland and Canada.

At the recent Human Dimension Implementation Meeting in Warsaw, participating States highlighted the need to promote and maintain freedom of the press throughout the OSCE region. All states agreed to respect these important freedoms in the 1991 Moscow Document.

In light of this, we share the concerns expressed by the Representative of Freedom of the Media, as well as other delegations here, about the recent developments which have led to the closure of the independent Belarus daily *Narodnaya Volya*.

It is critical that each OSCE participating State respect their international human rights obligations, and in particular ensure respect for democratic rights, freedom of expression and freedom of the press. Consequently, we urge Belarus to take the steps necessary to ensure that a free and independent press can flourish within their country.