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**STATEMENT BY MR. ALYAKSANDR SYCHOV,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS
TO THE OSCE, AT THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

13 April 2011

**In response to the statement by the President of Lithuania,
Ms. Dalia Grybauskaité**

Mr. Chairperson,

We welcome Ms. Dalia Grybauskaité, President of the Republic of Lithuania, to this meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council. We thank her for her clear and informative statement.

Your statement today, Madam President, like the readiness of Lithuania to chair the OSCE and assume responsibility for its development this year, is evidence of the huge significance that you attach to this Organization and European security issues. We sincerely respect your faith in the OSCE and its values and principles.

Mr. Chairperson,

Security is something that concerns every human being directly. Ensuring the safety of its citizens is a key task of primary importance for all countries. Unfortunately, we are not always successful. The threats and challenges that we face today sometimes exceed our capabilities. This was demonstrated by the terrorist act in Minsk; no one is safe from this kind of peril and no one enjoys guaranteed safety.

In this context, international, regional and subregional co-operation and active dialogue on an entire range of security issues are of paramount importance. The OSCE is a unique instrument for the development of such co-operation and dialogue for the purpose of strengthening our common security and stability.

Naturally, participating States may differ in their view of the priorities and methods of work. However, it is clear to all of us that there is a need today for progress in all three security “baskets” in implementing the OSCE principles and commitments throughout its area of responsibility. This concerns conflict resolution, arms control, the fight against terrorism, environmental security and human rights.

Among Belarus's traditional priorities within the OSCE are the improvement of confidence- and security-building measures, including the Vienna Document 1999, the stepping up of efforts to counter transnational threats and challenges, the enhancement of the OSCE's role in energy security issues, steps to combat trafficking in human beings, and the safeguarding of freedom of movement. We are gratified that to some degree these subjects coincide with the priorities of the Lithuanian Chairmanship.

We firmly believe that the OSCE must also move forward as regards its institutional development and the improvement of the work of its executive structures. We are looking forward to the organization during the Lithuanian Chairmanship of an effective and results-oriented process of consultations on the drafting and adoption of an OSCE charter. We are expecting substantive discussions on uniform criteria for the observation and assessment of elections by our Organization.

On the whole, we are hopeful that in the course of the Lithuanian Chairmanship it will be possible not only to preserve but also to increase the potential of the OSCE in the development of pan-European co-operation and safeguarding of security, and not to allow the level of confidence in the Organization to diminish or new dividing lines to appear.

The OSCE can have a future only if the Organization's work is based on uniform principles and on dialogue, co-operation, solidarity, understanding and mutual support.

Unfortunately, not all of our partners within the OSCE, Madam President, believe that problems need to be resolved through dialogue and co-operation, as you quite rightly noted in your statement. Their logic of pressure, restrictive measures and sanctions are completely counter-productive. Such actions contravene the principles on which the OSCE is founded and do not help us find mutual understanding.

We are confident that the Lithuanian Chairmanship will be able to ensure mutually respectful dialogue on the basis of equal rights within the Organization, to find points of convergence, to establish a common denominator and to take into account the views of all the participating States.

In conclusion, we should like to point out that, for Belarus, Lithuania is not simply the country holding the OSCE Chairmanship. It is our neighbour and close partner. It is our sincere wish, Madam President, that your country will perform the mission of chairing the OSCE this year with dignity and success and will achieve substantial results in the interests of the security of all our countries.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.