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Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. ANDREY RUDENKO,
DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO THE OSCE, AT THE 923rd MEETING
OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

6 September 2012

Regarding Belarus

Mr. Chairperson,

We should like to make a number of comments in connection with the statements by the delegations of Cyprus (on behalf of the European Union), the United States of America and Canada regarding Belarus.

Unfortunately, the subject of the internal political situation in that country has by now become an inescapable one at meetings of the Permanent Council. I would recall that at the last meeting on 26 July before the summer recess the same delegations raised these same issues. Unfortunately, our first meeting following the summer break also finds itself dealing with this same subject.

We have repeatedly spoken of the counter-productive nature of this approach, which leads to confrontation within the OSCE and diverts its attention from more serious problems. This state of affairs is particularly unacceptable on the eve of the critical period of preparation for the Ministerial Council meeting in Dublin. We call upon our partners to cease this practice of constantly applying pressure on the Belarusian authorities and to move instead towards a constructive dialogue with them based on mutual respect.

At the same time, we regard as inadmissible any interference in the work of the independent judicial bodies in Belarus and, all the more, the overt linkage of their decisions with the forthcoming parliamentary elections on 23 September.

Thank you for your attention.