

OSCE Ministerial Council Meeting
Stockholm, 2 December 2021

STATEMENT

**by H.E. Vladimir Makei, Minister of Foreign Affairs
of the Republic of Belarus**

Dear Madam Chairperson,
Excellencies,

At our annual meetings we habitually declare our unity in striving to achieve comprehensive security in the Eurasian and Atlantic area.

In reality, however, there is a growing distrust between us. Political arrogance flouts international law. Attempts to undermine the fragile architecture of European security are many. Western politicians are already talking directly about building a new “Fortress Europe”.

The old confrontation is being replaced by a new one, more uncompromising. Instead of erasing dividing lines, new iron curtains are being erected.

Those who applauded the fall of the Berlin Wall now cheer the building of new military fences.

Instead of communication, we hear threats and accusations. We can see this at today's meeting too.

Wars are already raging in the OSCE area, although for the time being they are of the information and hybrid kind.

Under a far-fetched pretext of migration crisis, NATO is rapidly increasing its military buildup on Belarus-EU border. To wage war with whom?

Water cannons with pepper gas, stun grenades flying from the West at women and children, hounding with dogs, beatings to death. Is this normal?

The future development of the continent is increasingly determined by the confrontational logic of sanctions. At the same time, it is cunningly packaged in monstrous lies about sanctions bringing good for ordinary people and strengthening sovereignty of state.

Recently, Mr. Josep Borrell stated bluntly that he considers the EU and the U.S. “rulers” of the world. According to him, it is necessary to continue imposing standards on others with one main goal which is not to lose power in this century. This means that lust for power, rather than values, lies at the heart of Western policy.

So, where's the truth? Who is right?

Today, for example, Belarus is being presented as “the devil incarnate”, “embodiment of the absolute evil”.

My country, like all our countries though, may be criticized for many things. Nobody is perfect.

But have we ever wondered who benefits from sanctions' pressure on Belarus? Who will benefit from the destruction of the country's statehood?

Please remember a simple truth: those who in effect demand the strangling of their people through destructive sanctions will never be accepted by this people and will not be in demand in this country.

Today some of my colleagues say openly that we should simply change the government in Belarus. They say that Belarus is a bad example of disobedience for other states.

This is a weird and awful logic. It results in Belarus being punished not just by individual sanctions, but by whole packages of sanctions. It is being punished only because we have revealed the "dark side" of European democracy.

Our Western partners teach Belarus their "ideal" version of democracy. But when it comes to their own political or economic interests, they prefer a different kind of democracy, one for "home consumption".

In the last two months alone, the countries neighboring Belarus have directly violated a dozen of fundamental international treaties and conventions. The international reaction has been zero. How should we understand it?

It is time to admit, as President Macron did recently, that artificial and blind imposition of fictitious standards does not contribute to evolutionary development of any nation, state or society. It only unwinds our progress and destroys sovereignty.

Yes, there are many problems in our region, including in Belarus. But they will not be solved under pressure or coercion. Quite the opposite. This is the logic of revolutionary confrontation. It was imposed on the Belarusian authorities in 2020.

But we are not seeking confrontation. We are ready for dialogue, both at home and abroad.

Constitutional reform in Belarus is a proof of this. It has united constructive forces of the society, including the opposition, in an inclusive process. Its goal is to modernize the state's political system, strengthen the mechanisms of checks and balances and increase resilience to modern challenges.

Despite unprecedented external pressure, we are ready to further contribute to strengthening cooperation both on bilateral basis and within the OSCE.

We stand ready to welcome any honest steps that will add to defusing tension and restoring mutual trust in Europe.

To sum up, one can say that every one of us is right. Every one of us carries our own truth. The question is whether we will have enough wisdom to reconcile our individual truths.

One would hope for the best.

To do this, we must all understand that there is no such thing as hopeless situations – there are only inconvenient and unpleasant, but necessary decisions.

Thank you for your attention.