

Chairmanship: Lithuania

868th PLENARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

1. Date: Thursday, 16 June 2011

Opened: 9.10 a.m.

Closed: 12.50 p.m.

2. Chairperson: Ambassador R. Norkus

Prior to taking up the agenda, the Chairperson, on behalf of the Permanent Council, welcomed the new Permanent Representative of Turkey to the OSCE, Ambassador Tacan Ildem, and the new Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea to the OSCE, Ambassador Hyun Cho.

In addition, Belarus, the Russian Federation, the Czech Republic (also on behalf of Germany, the United States of America, Canada, Denmark, Finland, the United Kingdom, Iceland, Norway, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Sweden) and the Chairperson discussed the inclusion of agenda item 7 in the agenda of the meeting.

3. Subjects discussed – Statements – Decisions/documents adopted:

Agenda item 1: REPORT BY THE HIGH COMMISSIONER ON NATIONAL MINORITIES

High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM.GAL/1/11/Rev.1 OSCE+), Hungary-European Union (with the candidate countries Croatia, Iceland, Montenegro and Turkey; the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate country Albania; the European Free Trade Association country Norway, member of the European Economic Area; as well as Andorra and Moldova, in alignment) (PC.DEL/572/11), United States of America (PC.DEL/568/11), Russian Federation (PC.DEL/576/11), Uzbekistan (PC.DEL/600/11), Georgia, Ukraine (PC.DEL/586/11), Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Chairperson

Agenda item 2: OSCE PROJECT CO-ORDINATOR IN UKRAINE

Chairperson, OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine, Hungary-European Union (with the candidate countries Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Iceland, Montenegro and Turkey; the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia; the European Free Trade Association country Norway, member of the European Economic Area; as well as Moldova, in alignment) (PC.DEL/573/11), United States of America (PC.DEL/569/11), Russian Federation (PC.DEL/577/11), Ukraine (PC.DEL/581/11 OSCE+)

Agenda item 3: REVIEW OF CURRENT ISSUES

Human rights situation in the United States of America: Belarus (PC.DEL/584/11), United States of America (PC.DEL/571/11)

Agenda item 4: REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE CHAIRPERSON-IN-OFFICE

- (a) *Chairmanship Conference on Combating Drug Trafficking and Enhancing Border Security and Management in the OSCE Area, to be held in Vienna on 16 and 17 June 2011:* Chairperson (CIO.GAL/117/11)
- (b) *Ambassadorial retreat in Baden, Austria, to be held on 23 and 24 June 2011 (CIO.GAL/115/11):* Chairperson (CIO.GAL/117/11)
- (c) *Selection procedure for the OSCE Secretary General:* Chairperson (CIO.GAL/117/11), OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (PA.GAL/1/11 OSCE+)

Agenda item 5: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL

- (a) *Announcement of the distribution of a written report of the Secretary General:* Director of the Conflict Prevention Centre
- (b) *OSCE contributions to qualify in part as official development assistance under the OECD-DAC:* Director of the Conflict Prevention Centre

Agenda item 6: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

Agenda item 7: BELARUS

OSCE Rapporteur under the Moscow Mechanism (PC.DEL/591/11), Czech Republic (also on behalf of Germany, the United States of America, Canada, Denmark, Finland, the United Kingdom, Iceland, Norway, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Sweden) (Annex 1), Russian Federation (Annex 2), Hungary-European Union (with the candidate countries

Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Iceland and Montenegro; the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia; as well as the European Free Trade Association country Norway, member of the European Economic Area, in alignment) (Annex 3), United States of America (Annex 4), Kazakhstan (PC.DEL/580/11), Switzerland (also on behalf of Liechtenstein) (Annex 5), Canada (Annex 6), Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan (PC.DEL/589/11 OSCE+), Armenia, Tajikistan, Belarus (Annex 7), Chairperson (CIO.GAL/118/11 OSCE+)

Point of order: Russian Federation

4. Next meeting:

Wednesday, 22 June 2011, at 9.30 a.m., in the Neuer Saal



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Permanent Council**

PC.JOUR/868
16 June 2011
Annex 1

Original: ENGLISH

868th Plenary Meeting

PC Journal No. 868, Agenda item 7

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC (ALSO ON BEHALF
OF GERMANY, THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CANADA,
DENMARK, FINLAND, THE UNITED KINGDOM, ICELAND,
NORWAY, THE NETHERLANDS, POLAND, ROMANIA,
SLOVAKIA AND SWEDEN)**

Mr. Chairperson,

The Czech Republic is delivering this statement for itself and on behalf of the following countries: Germany, the United States of America, Canada, Denmark, Finland, the United Kingdom, Iceland, Norway, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Sweden.

We warmly welcome the OSCE Moscow Mechanism rapporteur Professor Emmanuel Decaux at the Permanent Council and thank him and his team for their dedicated work in preparing the OSCE Report on Belarus.

We greatly appreciate the professionalism and commitment with which Professor Decaux fulfilled his challenging task and his thorough, comprehensive, and objective report.

We welcome that the Permanent Council has the opportunity to discuss this important item in accordance with the human dimension mechanism provisions agreed in the Moscow Document in 1991.

Mr. Chairperson,

At the Astana Summit, the Heads of State or Government of the participating States reaffirmed “categorically and irrevocably that the commitments undertaken in the field of the human dimension are matters of direct and legitimate concern to all participating States and do not belong exclusively to the internal affairs of the State concerned.” The OSCE Moscow Mechanism is one of the instruments established by consensus and in good faith by all participating States to implement this common commitment. The full implementation of commitments in the human dimension, notably in the areas of human rights and fundamental freedoms, is at the core of the OSCE security community.

The 14 participating States that invoked the Moscow Mechanism have been of the view that a particularly serious threat to the fulfilment of the provisions of the OSCE human dimension has arisen in Belarus. We therefore called for an OSCE fact-finding mission to enquire into the facts surrounding the demonstrations that took place in Belarus on 19 December 2010, as well as developments since then, in order to produce an independent and impartial report containing an accurate description of those facts as well as proposals and advice in response thereto.

As we have stated previously, we consider the Moscow Mechanism a useful OSCE tool of co-operation and dialogue, as well as a means of clarifying possible misunderstandings. However, Belarus did not appoint its own rapporteur to provide input to the report, it did not permit Professor Decaux to visit Belarus, and it did not provide information to Professor Decaux. We continue to believe that it would have been in the interests of Belarus to co-operate with the OSCE Rapporteur in the preparation of the report in order to clarify possible misunderstandings and provide a thorough review of the situation. We were therefore disappointed that Belarus chose not to co-operate.

Nonetheless, we consider the report as an important contribution for further dialogue and co-operation between the OSCE and Belarus in the framework of Belarus' promises to continue co-operation with and within the OSCE. We also believe the report should be brought to the attention of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva and the broader international community.

We remain deeply concerned about the state of human rights, democracy, and the rule of law in Belarus. We urge the government of Belarus to address the concerns raised in the Rapporteur's report as well as to implement the recommendations contained therein.

We also reserve the right to come back to this topic at a later date in the Permanent Council.

I ask you, Mr. Chairperson, to attach this statement to the journal of the day.

Thank you.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Permanent Council**

PC.JOUR/868

16 June 2011

Annex 2

ENGLISH

Original: RUSSIAN

868th Plenary Meeting

PC Journal No. 868, Agenda item 7

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

Mr. Chairperson,

First of all, we should like to express our disappointment at the fact that despite the strong and valid objections by one delegation the Chairmanship still decided to hold a Permanent Council meeting on the basis of an agenda that was not based on consensus. In doing so it has assumed political responsibility for the possible negative consequences of this extremely unfortunate precedent. We consider this to be a wrong move.

As regards the actual report by Mr. Emmanuel Decaux, we have no intention of commenting on its contents or providing any kind of assessment. At the same time, we cannot but express a number of general comments regarding the invoking of the Moscow Mechanism with respect to Belarus.

We are deeply concerned about the attempts of certain countries and groups of States to exert political and economic pressure on sovereign States through non-consensual OSCE mechanisms, and what is more to impose recommendations that are not based on consensus and demand that participating States implement them. We do not understand the motives of those who initiated the invoking of the Moscow Mechanism against Belarus at a time when Minsk has shown an unprecedented degree of openness towards co-operation with the OSCE, having invited experts from the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights to monitor judicial proceedings with regard to persons who were detained in the course of the events of 19 December 2010, with which we are all familiar.

It is clear that the use of instruments known to be confrontational will not result in anything other than heightened tension. We have therefore opposed and continue to oppose any non-consensual action with regard to Belarus on the basis of the Moscow Mechanism.

We believe that the non-consensual levers of the Moscow Mechanism became obsolete long ago. This was demonstrated a few years ago when they were used against another participating State. Unfortunately, nothing was learned from that negative experience. This is a cause for genuine disappointment.

We are unfortunately compelled to note that the heated discussions on this matter, which have been dragging on for several months now, are only damaging the OSCE, undermining its already tarnished reputation in the eyes of participating States. One has to ask oneself: who needs all this? Instead of giving individual States a “good dressing-down” it is important today more than ever before to focus on resolving strategic issues, namely consolidating the “security community” in line with the decisions adopted at the OSCE Summit in Astana. But what kind of joint steps towards this strategic goal can there be if even within the OSCE we cannot get rid of outdated stereotypes and dividing lines between countries?

It is time to put a stop to the clearly protracted dispute surrounding the Moscow Mechanism. The time has come to move towards practical steps to promote the “security community” and to work on a consolidated agenda for the Ministerial Council meeting in Vilnius, which, incidentally, is only five months away.

Thank you for your attention.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Permanent Council**

PC.JOUR/868

16 June 2011

Annex 3

Original: ENGLISH

868th Plenary Meeting

PC Journal No. 868, Agenda item 7

STATEMENT BY THE EUROPEAN UNION

The European Union warmly welcomes Professor Emmanuel Decaux to the Permanent Council and thanks him for the OSCE Rapporteur's report on Belarus, prepared in accordance with the OSCE Moscow Mechanism.

We would like to recall that on numerous occasions the EU has expressed its serious concern about the state of human rights in Belarus, with regard to freedom of expression, freedom of assembly, freedom of the media, as well as allegations of torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment. We recall that at the Astana Summit all Heads of State or Government reaffirmed categorically and irrevocably that the commitments undertaken in the field of the human dimension are matters of direct and legitimate concern to all participating States and do not belong exclusively to the internal affairs of the State concerned.

Regrettably, our dialogue in the Permanent Council has so far failed to dispel concerns about adherence by Belarus to OSCE principles and commitments, and the crackdown on democratic opposition, civil society and representatives of independent mass media continues unabated.

Being unable to rely on the previously available monitoring capacity of the former OSCE Office in Minsk, the EU welcomes the report by Professor Decaux as an independent and impartial overview of the events of 19 December and the developments since then.

We would like to reiterate that the Moscow Mechanism was developed to further respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms, democracy and the rule of law through dialogue and co-operation and assist in the resolution of specific relevant questions. It should be perceived as a tool for fostering dialogue and aimed at helping to solve problems, not to build new divisions. Under the Moscow Mechanism all participating States have committed themselves to co-operate fully with the expert mission, to facilitate its work and to grant the mission all the facilities necessary for the independent exercise of its functions, in particular to allow the mission to enter their territory without delay or hindrance.

Regrettably, Belarus decided not to co-operate. The Belarusian authorities neither appointed their own rapporteur as a member of the mission nor granted the necessary assistance and access to Professor Decaux. With the latter, Belarus violated its OSCE commitments.

We commend Professor Emmanuel Decaux for his professionalism, legal expertise and impartiality, which resulted in a balanced and factual approach to the subject matter. The report indicates “the seriousness, duration and scale of gross and systematic human rights violations, since the events of 19 December” and confirms our critical assessment of the situation in Belarus and non-compliance by Belarus with its OSCE commitments. The report brings us closer to understanding the scope and nature of the wave of repressions following last year’s presidential elections in Belarus, and also offers a valuable set of recommendations.

The EU expresses its hope that both the report and today’s deliberations will contribute to improving the situation in Belarus. We call upon the Belarusian authorities to fully utilise the report and do their utmost to implement recommendations contained therein, including conducting an independent and impartial investigation into the 19 December events, as well as into the attack against presidential candidate Vladimir Neklyaeu; reviewing the court judgements in cases related to the 19 December events; investigating on reported ill treatment of people detained and taking measures for the full prohibition and elimination of torture, inhuman, cruel and degrading treatment; ensuring effective access to justice for all detainees, suspects and defendants, as well as the independence of the judiciary; and taking effective measures to guarantee freedom of association and assembly and freedom of expression.

The EU encourages Belarus to deepen its co-operation with the OSCE and its institutions, especially on matters related to fostering human rights, fundamental freedoms, rule of law and democratic standards.

The EU calls again on Belarus to end the repression and to release immediately and rehabilitate all those detained and convicted on political grounds. The EU also calls upon Belarus to allow a meaningful OSCE presence in the country.

The EU will continue to follow closely further developments in Belarus, not only in the context of the OSCE, but also elsewhere, including at the Human Rights Council in Geneva, where the EU has initiated a resolution on Belarus.

Finally, the EU reiterates its readiness to assist the authorities of Belarus in meeting their OSCE commitments

The candidate countries Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro¹ and Iceland², the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and

1 Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

2 Iceland continues to be a member of the EFTA and the European Economic Area.

potential candidate countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia, the European Free Trade Association country Norway, member of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this statement.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Permanent Council**

PC.JOUR/868

16 June 2011

Annex 4

Original: ENGLISH

868th Plenary Meeting

PC Journal No. 868, Agenda item 7

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

In addition to subscribing fully to the statement read on behalf of the 14 invoking States, I would like to add the following:

We join in welcoming Professor Decaux to the Permanent Council as the OSCE Rapporteur for the Moscow Mechanism. We thank him for his comprehensive report documenting his fact-finding mission.

Like others at this table, the United States remains deeply concerned by the events that have taken place in Belarus since 19 December 2010.

The Moscow Mechanism Rapporteur's report contains a number of constructive recommendations that can help Belarus better fulfil its OSCE commitments.

The OSCE and the international community should focus on the concerns raised in the report. To do so requires that we all remain engaged with the people of Belarus.

Mr. Chairperson, the United States would be pleased to see closer co-operation between Belarus and the OSCE on a wide range of issues.

The government of Belarus has, on repeated occasions, declared its willingness to co-operate with the OSCE. The Belarus delegation here has repeatedly promised to present a proposed program of co-operation.

Yet, the mandate for the OSCE Office in Minsk was not extended. The Representative on Freedom of the Media, Dunja Mijatovic, has not been allowed to visit Belarus since the events of 19 December. Likewise, a fact-finding mission by the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Working Group on Belarus was rejected and the Chair of the OSCE PA Working Group was denied a visa to observe the trials of the political prisoners. While the presence of a limited ODIHR trial monitoring team is welcomed, we believe a more meaningful OSCE presence in Belarus is needed.

Furthermore, human rights defenders from Russia and Ukraine attempting to monitor, report, and advise the Government of Belarus on the human rights situation have been targeted for expulsion or banned from re-entering Belarus. Mr. Lukashenko has called for the expulsion of foreign media from Belarus, and at least one journalist from Russia has been expelled.

U.S. policy remains clear. We urge the Government of Belarus to study closely the Rapporteur's recommendations. The OSCE, its institutions, and the international community at large are standing by to help the people of Belarus. As the Rapporteur's report recommends, Belarus should fully implement its international commitments. Special attention should be paid to its commitments to protect human rights and fundamental freedoms, including media freedom, prohibiting torture and upholding the rule of law.

Likewise, Belarus should co-operate with the OSCE on legal and judicial review. This should include review of the trials related to the events of 19 December, which my government has consistently condemned. As we have said, their results should be reversed and the government should develop a judicial system based on international standards of due process.

Mr. Chairperson, we once again call on the Government of Belarus to immediately and unconditionally release all political prisoners and cease continuing human rights violations against critics of the government, who remain at risk of harassment and arbitrary arrest.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Permanent Council**

PC.JOUR/868

16 June 2011

Annex 5

ENGLISH

Original: GERMAN

868th Plenary Meeting

PC Journal No. 868, Agenda item 7

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF SWITZERLAND
(ALSO ON BEHALF OF LIECHTENSTEIN)**

Mr. Chairperson,

I am also speaking on behalf of Liechtenstein. We welcome Professor Decaux to the Permanent Council and thank him for his detailed report.

The events in Belarus that have been described by Professor Decaux are most alarming. They contradict our understanding of democracy, the rule of law and human rights protection.

In our view and in accordance with the recommendations regarding follow-up, the report should be published, distributed and also made available electronically. The question is whether it might be useful to further expand the information that was available to Professor Decaux and could not be evaluated.

The events of 19 December 2010 took place a mere two weeks after the Astana Summit, at which OSCE commitments were reaffirmed. In his address in Astana, President Lukashenko stressed that Belarus aspired to strengthen the OSCE *acquis* – from nuclear disarmament to protecting human rights. This is a clear commitment to OSCE obligations, and one which we take seriously.

In our statement of 7 April 2011 we urged that the invoking of the Moscow Mechanism should be taken as a starting point for a further exchange of views on all OSCE commitments. Belarus has moreover already made a number of substantial proposals for co-operation. These should now be incorporated into an action plan so that they can be given more substance. The Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights could offer helpful support in this connection.

It is a matter of demonstrating how Belarus, with the support of the OSCE, can meet its national and international commitments in the areas of democracy, the rule of law and human rights and of recognizing that these commitments have to be observed.

I would ask that this statement be attached to the journal of the day.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Permanent Council**

PC.JOUR/868

16 June 2011

Annex 6

Original: ENGLISH

868th Plenary Meeting

PC Journal No. 868, Agenda item 7

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF CANADA

Mr. Chairperson,

Canada fully subscribes to the statement delivered in the Council today by the Czech Republic, on behalf of 14 countries invoking the OSCE Moscow Mechanism, but now wishes to add its national position on this important matter.

We join others in welcoming Professor Decaux to the Permanent Council and thanking him for his Rapporteur's report on the situation in Belarus following the Presidential elections of 19 December 2010 (ODIHR.GAL/39/11 of 14 June 2011). We believe that Professor Decaux has fulfilled his task as OSCE Special Rapporteur ably, with independence and impartiality.

Canada wishes to stress that this OSCE report, now being released, is intended as an instrument of dialogue and co-operation to promote and protect the human rights of every member of Belarusian society. It is an open invitation to Belarus to engage constructively – an invitation that should not be missed.

The report from this fact-finding mission outlines the seriousness, duration and scale of the gross and systematic human rights violations by the regime in Minsk, since the events of 19 December 2010. We strongly urge Belarus to reflect on the report's findings and recommendations, and to demonstrate adherence to OSCE commitments and standards by immediately stopping all politically motivated trials and the ongoing harassment of civil society and the media, and by releasing all political prisoners.

The Belarusian Government must respect the rights of its people and meet its obligations under international law. The Government of Canada remains dismayed that, in today's modern Europe, the regime in Minsk continues to disregard respect for human rights and the rule of law.

To conclude, Canada wishes to express its continued solidarity with the Belarusian people and our renewed commitment to supporting the development of civil society in Belarus. We take this opportunity to reiterate our readiness to assist the authorities of Belarus in meeting their OSCE commitments. We also call for the restoration of a meaningful OSCE presence in Belarus.

Mr. Chairperson, my delegation asks you to append this statement to the journal of the day.

Thank you, merci.



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Permanent Council**

PC.JOUR/868

16 June 2011

Annex 7

ENGLISH

Original: RUSSIAN

868th Plenary Meeting

PC Journal No. 868, Agenda item 7

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF BELARUS

Mr. Chairperson,

First of all, allow me to express once again our principled objection to the inclusion of the Belarus question as a separate item on the agenda of today's meeting of the Permanent Council and also our deep regret that despite our well-founded position the Chairmanship has openly ignored the opinion of one of the participating States, and in so doing has caused serious damage to the consensual nature of the activities of our common Organization.

Nevertheless, since the OSCE Permanent Council is a forum for political dialogue, we should like once again to inform all the participating States openly of the position of the Republic of Belarus with regard to the invoking of the Moscow Mechanism and also to the so-called "report" presented today.

Firstly, we are firmly convinced that the Moscow Mechanism is now definitively outdated and is not the instrument for mutually respectful dialogue and constructive co-operation that our predecessors in the early days of the establishment of the OSCE may have intended it to be. Its non-consensual and essentially confrontational nature contravenes our Organization's strategic objectives, including that of building a genuine security community free of dividing lines, something which the leaders of our countries agreed upon at last year's summit in Astana.

Experience has shown that attempts to invoke this mechanism lead, rather, to polarization and confrontation within the OSCE and do not contribute to the search for a solution to problematic issues and to the resolution of mutual concerns.

Unfortunately, the initiative of 14 countries to invoke the Moscow Mechanism with respect to Belarus has merely confirmed that they are attempting to use this instrument primarily to exert open political pressure on my country and to justify their own discriminatory measures, which run counter to OSCE commitments.

Secondly, as our delegation has repeatedly noted, we disagree categorically with the assessment of the situation in Belarus by the countries initiating the invoking of the Moscow

Mechanism, and we consider the claims that there is some kind of “threat to the fulfilment of OSCE commitments” in the Republic of Belarus to be completely unfounded.

Considering that Belarus has regularly informed the members of the Permanent Council of all issues of interest or concern to our partners, and considering the work in Belarus of a mission of experts from the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights who are monitoring the judicial proceedings against the participants in the events of 19 December 2010 in Minsk, there were neither sufficient grounds nor the necessary conditions from a procedural point of view for invoking the above-mentioned mechanism. Furthermore, such a step was contrary to the provisions of the OSCE Moscow Document itself, which does not allow two missions to be sent to one country on the same matter at the same time.

However, as the further course of events has shown, the initiating countries were not particularly concerned with observing the formal procedures of the Moscow Document including, for example, the deadlines set for the preparation of the report.

All this led to our principled refusal to co-operate within the framework of this initiative of the 14 countries or to collaborate in any way with the so-called “rapporteur”.

Thirdly, with regard to the report itself that was presented today, that document does not stand up to scrutiny in terms of “professionalism, objectivity, independence and impartiality”.

The report is highly tendentious in nature. It is dominated by the most unfounded assessments of the situation in Belarus, while completely ignoring the official arguments and comments of the Belarusian side with regard to the events in Minsk in December. The document contains virtually no analysis by the “rapporteur” himself, and the main sources of his assessments and inferences are one-sided reports and statements by the initiating countries or supporters of the invoking of the Moscow Mechanism.

In particular, the conclusions of the “rapporteur” are based primarily on extracts from the 2010 human rights report of the United States Department of State, statements by the European Parliament, the European Union and the Council of Europe as well as a number of international non-governmental organizations that do not even have offices in Belarus.

Essentially, the report presented is simply a compilation of biased and one-sided political assessments, and not a balanced conclusion based on a thorough analysis of all available facts and circumstances as well as of the legal provisions.

The document contains no references to the specific norms of the international agreements of the Republic of Belarus which were ostensibly violated. The “rapporteur” refers quite superficially to the specific OSCE commitments, thus demonstrating his inadequate grasp of our Organization’s normative basis. We shall not even mention the absence of any deep knowledge of the Belarusian national legislation on the part of the report’s author.

Overall, the question arises as to how seriously a document like this, which was prepared by a “rapporteur” who compromised himself in a similar situation in 2003, can be taken.

Fourthly, since the invoking of the Moscow Mechanism and the preparation of the report were accompanied by the aforementioned gross systemic violations, and since the report itself is invalid both procedurally and in terms of its content, Belarus will not accept the report’s conclusions and does not consider itself bound by its recommendations. Today’s discussion has demonstrated that this initiative has no future.

In conclusion, I should like to emphasize that the Republic of Belarus takes an extremely responsible approach to implementing its international commitments, including those within the OSCE. We also intend to continue to observe rigorously the provisions of the founding documents of our Organization, including the commitments in the human dimension.

In this regard the principle of ensuring the rule of law and the independence of the judicial system will be crucial in concluding the investigations and the legal assessment of the events of 19 December 2010 in Minsk.

We are willing to continue dialogue, including a critical one, with all our partners in the Organization. At the same time we hope that this dialogue will be open, mutually respectful and constructive and that it will be conducted in the clear and established OSCE forums such as the Permanent Council in particular.

We also intend to develop close collaboration with the OSCE and its executive structures on a wide range of matters, including through possible joint projects.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.