

Canadian Delegation to the
Organization for Security & Cooperation
in Europe



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

**DELEGATION OF CANADA TO THE OSCE
INTERVENTION ON FREEDOMS OF ASSEMBLY
AND EXPRESSION IN BELARUS
685TH MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL
1 NOVEMBER 2007**

Canada joins others in calling for greater freedoms of expression and assembly in Belarus.

We have noted consistent violations of these basic rights in the country, in spite of OSCE commitments to ensure the application of these values.

In the past, peaceful marches, such as the “Europe March,” have resulted in pre-emptive arrests of some organisers and heavy-handed repression from state security forces.

We note that a number of people are still imprisoned from previous peaceful demonstrations and call for their immediate release.

Canada stresses the important role that OSCE could play in assisting democratic reform in Belarus and encourages the government to engage the OSCE Office in Minsk and ODIHR to the fullest extent.

We further urge Belarusian officials to avoid repetition of this behaviour during an upcoming march on 4 November and allow the people of Belarus their fundamental freedoms.