



PERMANENT DELEGATION OF NORWAY
TO THE OSCE

Statement in response to

**Presentation of Moscow Mechanism report on the fulfilment of the provisions
of the OSCE Human Dimension by the Republic of Belarus**

Delivered by Counsellor Marit H. Lillealtern at the Permanent Council
Vienna, 11 May 2023

Mr Chair,

In addition to the joint statement of the invoking states, presented by the Permanent Representative of Denmark, I will present a few remarks in national capacity. We thank Professor Ascensio for his work as Rapporteur on this important topic.

The report documents serious and ongoing human rights violations committed by the Belarusian regime. It clearly shows that Belarus has failed – and is failing – to live up to its international commitments to protect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of its citizens.

The Rapporteur describes how the Belarusian government has responded to the protests of 2020 through extensive and severe legislative changes, designed to prevent any form of opposition. Laws now allow termination of a person's Belarusian nationality, thus causing the cessation of many rights. We take seriously the Rapporteur's warning that this could be used against political opponents exiled abroad, creating stateless persons in contradiction with OSCE commitments (especially Helsinki 1992) and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We condemn this severe weakening of the Rule of Law and urge Belarusian authorities to revoke this and other repressive legislation.

We condemn the Belarusian regime's use of torture and violence against its critics. It is deplorable that opposition politicians, independent media workers and civil society representatives risk arbitrary arrest and detention under inhuman conditions at the hands of a brutal, repressive regime.

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Belarus has failed to take any effort to bring the perpetrators of these abuses to justice. Considering the ongoing impunity, Norway fully supports initiatives taken to secure accountability, including the *International Accountability Platform for Belarus* and the *OHCHR examination of the human rights situation in Belarus*.

We again call on the Belarusian authorities to end the repression, release all political prisoners and engage in a genuine dialogue with the democratic opposition.

Thank you