

Stockholm, 19 November 2020

## Statement from the Swedish delegation to the OSCE PA on the situation in the Republic of Belarus

Dear Members of the Parliamentary Assembly,

Ever since the presidential election on the 9<sup>th</sup> of August, 2020, the people of the Republic of Belarus have taken to the streets to protest. In their strive for democracy, freedom of speech and free and fair elections, the Swedish delegation to the OSCE PA stands firmly behind them.

Yet, the outrageous violence against civilians is continuing. Reports of beatings, rape and torture are all too frequent. Some have even paid the ultimate price.

Just one day after the election, on the 10<sup>th</sup> of August, the first death during the demonstrations occurred. Videos show 34-year-old Alexander Taraikovsky standing empty-handed as a police officer shoots him in the chest. Mr. Taraikovsky's death certificate states that he bled to death from the open wound in his chest.

On the 11<sup>th</sup> of November, Belarusian artist and painter Roman Bondarenko was arrested outside his home. According to reports, Mr. Bondarenko was taken into custody by police in civilian uniforms where he was beaten into coma. Mr. Bondarenko was transported to the hospital in critical condition, but the doctors could not save his life. One day after his arrest, he was dead.

As parliamentarians and members of the international community, we must stay engaged and affirm our support for democracy, political pluralism and free and fair elections. We cannot remain silent as the people of an OSCE member state is being denied their basic human rights.

Therefore, the Swedish delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly demands that Belarus, as an OSCE member state, now adhere to its commitments in the Helsinki Final Act and the Paris Charter.

The violence against civilians must stop. The murders must be investigated. The perpetrators must be held accountable.

Yours sincerely,



Johan Büser  
Head of Delegation



Margareta Cederfelt  
Deputy Head of Delegation



The Delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

THE SWEDISH PARLIAMENT SE-100 12 Stockholm • Phone +46 8 786 40 00 • [www.riksdagen.se](http://www.riksdagen.se)