

Statement by

**the Republic of Slovenia**

at the

**46th Session of the Human Rights Council**

**Enhanced Interactive Dialogue on High Commissioner’s report on Belarus**

*Geneva, 25 February 2021*

Madame President,

We thank the High Commissioner for her presentation. Slovenia aligns itself with the EU statement.

We are deeply concerned by the pattern of serious human rights violations and deteriorating human rights situation in Belarus. The continued curtailing of the rights to freedom of association, peaceful assembly and expression demands our continued engagement and response.

We are appalled by the intimidation and attacks on people seeking to peacefully exercise their civil and political rights. Arbitrary arrests, detentions and criminal charges, disregard for due process and fair trial, reported by the High Commissioner are unacceptable. We are particularly concerned by the reports of prevalence of torture and ill-treatment in detention, furthermore, by the use of force against detainees, sexual violence, including threats of rape. The persistent lack of investigations and accountability demands our action. Slovenia is of firm belief that there should be no impunity for those responsible.

All political prisoners and other persons illegally detained for legitimately exercising their human rights in Belarus, should be promptly released and allowed to challenge the charges brought against them.

Madame President, could the High Commissioner elaborate on the access of her Office to the country and her ability to investigate human rights violations on the ground?

Thank you.