

BELARUS

**Written statement by the EBRD
Alternate Governor for the
Republic of Belarus, Mr. Dmitry
Yaroshevich, Deputy Minister of
Economy of the Republic of
Belarus**

Mr. Chair

Mme. President

Governors and Delegates

Ladies and Gentlemen

First of all, allow me to congratulate the Bank on its 30th anniversary and to acknowledge its invaluable contribution to the well-being and economic growth of the region.

The anniversary is a good opportunity to recall and to recognize the work executed by the Bank. Throughout our cooperation EBRD has carried out 143 projects in Belarus, 70 of which are still in progress.

Every project is vital for our country because it makes a significant contribution to the welfare of Belarus and its citizens which is our primary goal.

The COVID-19 pandemic has revealed serious shortcomings in addressing health emergency worldwide, and has threatened to derail progress towards basic development goals. Many countries, including the Republic of Belarus, were faced with unforeseen costs to preserve people's lives and were forced to cut their own (domestic) budget

investments, including those in the further development of health care systems, education and other priority areas for sustainable development of society. As a result, the need for external investments in infrastructure projects is growing and requires the search for additional sources of funding.

The Government of the Republic of Belarus is making every effort to combat the coronavirus and minimize the negative impact of the pandemic on the socio-economic development of the country, giving an unconditional priority to protecting the health and lives of people, strengthening the sustainability of the healthcare system.

The measures taken make it possible to control the situation with regard to the incidence of COVID-19 virus. The health care system ensures the availability of quality outpatient and inpatient treatment.

At the same time, we work to improve the efficiency of the national economy and take measures to maximize the mobilization of internal resources and sources of economic growth, improve the institutional environment, consolidate the efforts of the state, business and citizens in order to build an economy of new opportunities based on the principles of equality, initiative and partnership.

However, in order to achieve these plans at such a difficult time, there is a growing need for a multilateral response and significant support from the international community to ensure a full recovery. International financial institutions certainly play a decisive role.

The EBRD-approved “Solidarity Package” is undoubtedly of particular importance for countries, including Belarus, and, in our

opinion, makes a significant contribution to minimizing the negative impact of the pandemic and to a sustainable economic recovery.

We are grateful for the EBRD's help provided to our private sector during this tough period of time. 220 million Euro of support to the Belarusian recipients made it possible even for vulnerable businesses to stand ground.

It goes without saying that the support of small and medium-sized enterprises gives an incentive to the economic growth. We highly appreciate EBRD's helping hand in stimulating economic activity in the financial sector with a strong focus on private sector which holds 63% of total share portfolio.

EBRD's projects in private sector refer to investments in the production providing jobs to thousands of people in Belarus. Furthermore, they shape an opportunity for the private sector to move onward and upward. Partnership with Belarusian financial institutions means support for small and medium-sized enterprises which is of great importance today during the crisis events.

Due to the perceived lack of international liquidity, it is of particular importance for us at this stage to expand the channels to support the real sector of the economy through the existing financial institutions in the country. In this regard, we consider the increase of EBRD credit lines to Belarusian banks for subsequent lending to the real sector, in particular small and medium-sized businesses to be crucial.

We are deeply concerned about the situation with financing of public sector in Belarus. Those 7 projects being carried out in public sector with financial support of EBRD are pivotal for the well-being of

our citizens. Bringing these projects to life means proper accomplishment of one of the main aims of EBRD work in Belarus which is sustainable development.

Implementation of the projects is set for supplying people with safe-health water, decreasing of illnesses caused by water and sanitation, excluding pollution of ground waters, CO2 emissions reduction.

It's essential for us not only to finish the ongoing projects on which people's hopes are already pinned, but also to continue our work towards new infrastructure projects.

Collaboration in the field of infrastructure is the key to a decent life assurance for the entire country. For the Belarusian side, it is of considerable interest to continue mutually beneficial cooperation with the EBRD on the implementation of projects in the municipal infrastructure sector, including considering the potential for attracting credit resources of the bank in the form of sub-sovereign loans to the cities of Belarus.

As a shareholder of the Bank, Belarus holds the same position concerning environmental sustainability and transition to Green economy. We are pleased to see the intention to make the world "greener" by minding the climate agenda and the fossil fuel sector issues. These aspects give us a further proof of the Bank's ability to shift its focal points towards what is of primary importance today.

It goes without saying that it's of great importance for Belarus to maintain the operation mode developed during these past years with EBRD.

EBRD for Belarus is a reliable and impartial international partner with decades of working experience in the country. The Bank's support

for Belarusian citizens has an appreciated value and has a beneficial effect on developing positive coherent and congregative international agenda within the country.

Belarus is open for a constructive dialogue with EBRD on all issues of long-term cooperation without exception.

The value of EBRD for Belarus lies in the fact that its work is aimed primarily at the well-being of every citizen of Belarus.

The EBRD's work has a positive influence on all spheres of life of our people. It resonates not only in economic development of the country but also in social order.

When it refers to such a significant part there should be no place for hasty judgments and rush decisions. Impartial and comprehensive estimation of all the effects of imposing any restrictive decision – those are the things we need during this challenging time.

Actual cooperation allows to form the landmarks for further development, taking into account universal human values.

To sum it all up may I take this possibility to express our gratitude and respect to the Board of Governors and to the management of the Bank for their efforts. The Bank can be proud of its contribution to the success and economic growth of our region.

Thank you for the attention!