

Latvia expresses solidarity with political prisoners under Lukashenko's regime

Published: 27.11.2021.

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On the Day of Solidarity with Belarus Political Prisoners, Latvia expresses strong solidarity with the demand of the Belarusian people to respect its fundamental democratic freedoms and human rights.

Violence and mass-scale human rights abuses in Belarus, which increased notably after the fraudulent and unrecognised presidential elections in 2020, are a cause of deep concern. Latvia condemns repression, intimidation and unjustified imprisonments, which, with the police and courts operating under the conditions of impunity, were imposed on the representatives of civil society and members of independent media. More than 880 political prisoners are currently held in prisons in Belarus.

It is unacceptable that defence lawyers for the accused are impeded, and European diplomats are denied access to political prisoners in Belarus to check the numerous reports about the inhuman conditions of Belarusian penal institutions that the political prisoners are kept in.

Latvia supports international platforms of non-governmental organisations for a systemic documentation of human rights abuses in Belarus and their efforts of preserving evidence, as well as other international formats to hold the perpetrators of human rights violations in Belarus responsible. Since the 2020 elections, Latvian non-governmental organisations have been providing support for persons who have suffered from political repression and persecution.

We call on Belarusian authorities to immediately stop violence against and crackdown on their people and to release unconditionally all those wrongfully accused. Latvia and the European Union are applying step-by-step approach and we are prepared to consider further action, including expanded sanctions, to oppose the blatant disregard by the Lukashenko regime of fundamental democratic freedoms and international commitments.

<https://www.mfa.gov.lv/en/article/latvia-expresses-solidarity-political-prisoners-under-lukashenkos-regime>