

59th Session of the UN Human Rights Council
Interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Belarus
Statement on behalf of the Nordic-Baltic States –
Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway and Sweden
delivered by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia
H.E. Ms Baiba Braže
26 June 2025

Mr President,

I speak on behalf of the Nordic and Baltic states. We thank the Special Rapporteur for his report.

The state of human rights and lack of accountability in Belarus is intolerable.

The Belarusian authorities continue to carry out persistent and systemic repressions – eradication of dissent, closure of nearly 2000 NGOs and a complete crackdown on civil society and human rights. The sham elections earlier this year were devoid of legitimacy and demonstrably failed to meet any international standards.

Especially deplorable are the documented cases of arbitrary arrests, trials in absentia, sexual and gender-based violence, especially targeted against women, and other severe ill-treatment of detainees, as well as misuse of the judiciary.

We are equally appalled by the regime's politically motivated forced imposition of psychiatric treatment.

As concluded in the report of the Group of Independent Experts, some violations, specifically imprisonment and persecution, may amount to crimes against humanity.

We take note of the release of 14 political prisoners, but nearly 1200 are still behind bars. We demand the Belarusian authorities to immediately and unconditionally release all political prisoners and ensure their effective rehabilitation, cease brutal repression of civil society, human rights defenders, journalists, lawyers, trade unionists, LGBTQ+ community and dissenting voices.

The state-organized instrumentalization of migrants on the EU border puts human lives at risk and demonstrates the Belarusian government's disregard for international norms.

The international community must find effective ways to hold Belarusian authorities fully accountable for all human rights violations, as well as for complicity in Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

Mr Special Rapporteur,

What concrete measures can the international community take to better protect Belarusian civil society in exile from transnational repressions?

I thank you!