



To:

Mr Radosław Sikorski, the Foreign Minister of the Republic of Poland  
Mr Guido Westerwelle, the Foreign Minister of the Federal Republic of Germany

**Statement  
on frequent visits of the EU member-states' senior politicians to Minsk**

We, civic and human rights organizations of several European countries, would like to jointly express our deepest concerns about human rights violations in Belarus, an EU neighbouring country.

Although we welcome the dialogue between the Belarusian authorities and the EU, we would like to draw the attention of the European community to a still urgent problem of Belarus not fulfilling its international human rights obligations.

We call upon representatives of the EU authorities to bear in mind that in Belarus regime's opponents and independent journalists are still facing intimidation and persecution, the country still practices the death penalty and that freedoms of expression, association and assembly are routinely violated.

Taking into account that visits of senior EU politicians are successfully used by the Belarusian authorities as a sign of support to the incumbent president Aliaksandr Lukashenka ahead of the upcoming election, we ask to keep questions about democratic values of freedom and human dignity high up on the agenda during contacts with the official Minsk.

We strongly believe that in negotiations with the Belarusian authorities besides pragmatic political and economic questions, EU officials should insist on progress in the field of human rights and democracy via:

- unconditional release of political prisoners – Mikalai Autukhovich, Uladzimir Asipenka and others;
- putting an end to prosecution of independent journalists;
- moratorium on and abolition of death penalty;
- repeal of Article 193.1 of the Criminal Code, stipulating imprisonment for up to two years for activities of an unregistered organization;
- holding free and transparent Presidential elections.

**List of supporting organizations:**

Belarus Watch, Vilnius, Lithuania  
Belarusian Human Rights House (in exile in Vilnius, Lithuania)  
Civic Belarus, Prague, Czech Republic  
Human Rights House Foundation, Oslo, Norway  
Libereco, Partnership for Human Rights, Bonn, Germany

**Contact person:**

Vadim Vileita, [belaruswatch@belaruswatch.org](mailto:belaruswatch@belaruswatch.org), +370 614 82880