

++ template ++ for EWC Members, other cultural and human rights organisations, citizens ++

Stop the attacks on citizens in Belarus!

Dear Minister of Foreign Affairs,

Belarus and its citizens are undergoing a terrible wave of repression and indiscriminate attacks on peaceful demonstrators protesting against police abuse and demanding the release of all unjustly held prisoners, the organisation of transparent and democratic new elections and the safeguarding of human rights and freedom of speech.

Journalists and bloggers are being threatened, attacked and arrested; news websites have been blocked, and free access to information is being suppressed. Independent sources report of brutal police violence in the streets and of even worse abuse in prisons, including psychological torture, indiscriminate beatings and rape, as you will see in the attached report "Voices Of Belarus" of the Union of Belarusian Writers.

All this happened after presidential elections tainted by suspicions of massive manipulation, and where the opposition candidate has had to escape into exile.

We, the signing organization(s), therefore encourage you to:

- on behalf of (GOVERNMENT, COUNTRY) and the (GOVERNMENT, COUNTRY) to officially and publicly condemn the attacks on citizens in Belarus;
- to give the situation in Belarus the highest priority in (COUNTRY)'s international engagement, both through the EU, the Council of Europe, the OSCE and UNESCO;
- to offer concrete support to citizens as well as writers in distress in Belarus in coordination with the Union of Belarusian Writers;
- to demand to release all citizens arrested during the 2020 election campaign, to reconstitute a credible Central Election Committee, and to hold a free, fair and transparent election *under international observation*;
- and to urge all the governments of the European Union not to stand by in silence, but to bring strong pressure to bear on the autocratic regime of Alyaksandr Lukashenka [Alexander Lukashenko], and to uphold the values on which the European Union is based.

Sincerely

(Your Name, Your Organisation)