



**LIETUVOS RESPUBLIKOS SEIMO  
UŽSIENIO REIKALŲ KOMITETAS  
SEIMAS OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA  
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

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Vilnius, January 5, 2011

Gabrielle Albertini  
Chair, Committee on Foreign Affairs  
European Parliament  
Bât. Altiero Spinelli  
08E205  
60, rue Wiertz 60  
B-1047 Bruxelles

Dear Chair Gabriele Albertini,

I applaud your decision to hold the extraordinary meeting on Belarus with the Foreign Affairs Committee, the Sub-Committee on Human Rights, the European Parliament Euronest delegation and the EP delegation to Belarus, together with EP President Jerzy Buzek and discuss the possible further responses by the European Union.

On 29 December 2010 I chaired a hearing at the Seimas Committee on Foreign Affairs on Belarus. The Members of the European Parliament from Lithuania, Members of the Seimas, the foreign diplomatic corps, numerous NGOs, and the Lithuanian press had the chance to first acquaint themselves with the video and audio recordings of the 19 December and subsequent events in Belarus and then listen to the members of the campaign teams of the opposition candidates Vladimir Neklyaeu, Andrei Sannikov, Grigory Kostusev, and Vitaly Rimashevsky. Afterwards we had an important exchange of ideas among the parliamentarians and representatives of the NGOs, present at the hearing.

The Committee on Foreign Affairs called for the immediate release from jail of hundreds of protesters, especially those who are in poor health. Their imprisonment and possible denial of medical help may put their lives at risk.

The Committee condemned the actions that the government of Belarus took to undermine the democratic process, as well as the use of disproportionate force against the official

opposition presidential candidates, political activists, civil society representatives and journalists.

All the material of the hearing is available on the official website of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania at [http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter/w2008\\_home.dabarseime](http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter/w2008_home.dabarseime)

with the translation into English at:

[http://media3.lrs.lt/SEIMAS2010/2010/RENGINIAI/EIB/EIB\\_20101229\\_EN.WMV](http://media3.lrs.lt/SEIMAS2010/2010/RENGINIAI/EIB/EIB_20101229_EN.WMV)

Should you find it important, I would be ready to attend the extraordinary meeting at the European Parliament on 12 January 2011 and present the results of the hearing at the Lithuanian Seimas.

I have already sent a letter to Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, Chairwoman of the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs, and asked her to consider a possibility of a similar hearing at the Committee.

I strongly believe that responses from democratic Parliaments from around the world are essential; it would clearly indicate that acts of violence in Belarus are not to be forgotten.

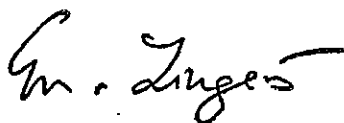
Mr Lukashenko has shown his true face to the world for too many times already. The world must have a united stance on Belarus and maintain pressure on Lukashenko's government. We need concerted efforts and cannot be fooled into the same old trap again.

At the same time, in my opinion, it is imperative to support educational and civil society building initiatives for the benefit of all citizens of Belarus. The European Humanities University (EHU) is a Belarusian university located in Vilnius. The EHU was founded in Minsk in 1992 and closed by the authorities in 2004. It re-launched its activities in Vilnius in 2005 and was granted the status of a Lithuanian university in 2006. The EHU is the only Belarusian University committed to academic freedom. The EHU declared its readiness to accept the Belarusian students, expelled from their universities after the violent crackdown following the presidential election, to all of its programs. The news that the European Commission is considering termination of the support to the EHU reached us at the end of 2010. In the current situation, it would be a serious blow to the only democratic, independent educational institution, only 50 km away from the border with Belarus. I hope that the European Parliament will continue to lend its support to the EHU and similar institutions that are paving the way to the future of democratic Belarus.

Please accept my best wishes for a Happy and Prosperous New Year 2011!

Yours sincerely,

Emanuel Zingeris



Chairman of the Committee

President, Parliamentary Forum of the Community of Democracies