



DELEGATION FOR RELATIONS WITH BELARUS

- The Chairman -

STATEMENT

**By Mr Jacek PROTASIEWICZ,
Chairman of the Delegation for relations with Belarus**

Brussels, 23 December 2010. On behalf of the Delegation for relations with Belarus, I once again call upon the Belarusian authorities to refrain from all forms of repressions which have been imposed on the participants of the demonstration which took place on 19th December 2010 in Minsk, including the independent journalists, civil society activists as well as the leaders and representatives of the political opposition.

In this context I am calling on the Belarusian authorities to release from prisons all former presidential candidates on their own recognizance, namely Uladzimir Neklayaew, Ales Mikhalevich, Vital Rymashewski, Andrey Sannikaw, Nikolay Statkevich, as well as others who are facing criminal charges on the basis of an Article 293.1 and 2 of the Criminal Code.

Furthermore, I demand that all the detained, in particular those injured during the rally, will be provided with adequate medical assistance.

Moreover I call on the Belarusian government to refrain from penalizing and to immediately release hundreds of people, including the students and their teachers, who have been detained since afore mentioned rally took place, for peaceful exercise of their right to freedom of assembly and expression.

I strongly condemn the assaults against the journalists who covered the events of the Election Day. Mass police violence which effected in injuring reporters, destroying their equipment and detaining them, contradicts the freedom of expression and freedom of media. I call on the Belarusian authorities to immediately liberate all the media representatives.

I remind that these violations of the fundamental values such as freedom of expression, freedom of assembly and freedom of media contradict the possibility for Belarus of a partnership and cooperation offered by the European Union.

For further information contact:

Jacek Protasiewicz

Delegation for relations with Belarus, Chairman

Tel. 0032-2-28 47 743, email: jacek.protasiewicz@europarl.europa.eu

**B-1047 BRUSSELS TEL. (32-2) 28 47 743 FAX (32-2) 284.97 43
F-67070 STRASBOURG TEL. (33-3) 88.17.77 43 FAX (33-3) 88.17.9743**