



Plenary sitting

B9-0531/2022

22.11.2022

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

with request for inclusion in the agenda for a debate on cases of breaches of human rights, democracy and the rule of law

pursuant to Rule 144 of the Rules of Procedure

on the continuing repression of the democratic opposition and civil society in Belarus
(2022/2956(RSP))

Anna Fotyga, Karol Karski, Charlie Weimers, Adam Bielan, Beata Kempa, Witold Jan Waszczykowski, Assita Kanko, Joachim Stanisław Brudziński, Beata Mazurek, Bogdan Rzońca, Elżbieta Rafalska, Ryszard Czarnecki, Hermann Tertsch, Andżelika Anna Możdżanowska, Jacek Saryusz-Wolski, Patryk Jaki, Valdemar Tomaševski, Alexandr Vondra, Anna Zalewska, Carlo Fidanza
on behalf of the ECR Group

**European Parliament resolution on the continuing repression of the democratic opposition and civil society in Belarus
(2022/2956(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Belarus,
- having regard to the UN Human Rights Council report of 4 March 2022 on the situation of human rights in Belarus in the run-up to the 2020 presidential election and its aftermath,
- having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and to all human rights conventions to which Belarus is a party,
- having regard to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms,
- having regard to the European Council conclusions of 24 May 2021, 25 June 2021 21 + 22 October 2021 on Belarus,
- having regard to the Foreign Affairs Council conclusions on 21 June 2021 and 15 November 2021 on Belarus,
- having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and to all human rights conventions to which Belarus is a party,
- having regard to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Charter of Paris for a New Europe,
- having regard to the report of 4 May 2021 of the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Belarus, Anaïs Marin, to the UN Human Rights Council,
- having regard to the UN Human Rights Council resolution of 13 July 2021 on the situation of human rights in Belarus,
- having regard to the UN Human Rights Council adoption of 11 resolutions of 1 April 2022 that extends mandate on Belarus;
- having regard to European Parliament's recommendation of 16 September 2021 to the Council, the Commission and the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy on the direction of EU-Russia political relations,
- having regard to the awarding of the European Parliament's 2020 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought to the democratic opposition in Belarus,
- having regard to the Statement by the North Atlantic Council of 12th of November 2021

on the situation at the Poland-Belarus border;

- having regard to Rule 132(2) and (4) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas following the unfair and falsified August 2020 elections, Lukashenka's regime have been undertaking unacceptable violence against peaceful protesters, including intimidation, arbitrary arrests and detentions,
- B. whereas more than 40 000 Belarusians are estimated to have been detained at some point for protesting against the regime while human rights defenders have documented hundreds of cases of torture and ill-treatment, with thousands fleeing the country while several people are still missing and others have been found dead; whereas at least 1451 Belarusian are unfairly imprisoned according to Viasna, facing extremely severe punishments for their desire to live in a free and democratic country;
- C. whereas Lukashenka has widened his campaign against human rights activists and journalists, having imprisoned Andrzej Poczobut, a prominent journalist and activist of the Polish minority in Belarus, and adding him to its "terrorist list"; whereas unacceptable persecution of Polish minority has intensified, including recent decisions of the Belarusian authorities aimed at eliminating education in the Polish language, searches in houses of Polish leaders, destruction of Polish cemeteries, graves of poets, writers, insurgents and soldiers of the Home Army; whereas the authorities terminated the contract of gratuitous use of the Red Catholic Church with the community "Roman Catholic Parish of St. Simon and St. Helen" and the parish was required to remove the property from the church;
- D. whereas despite thousands of reports of police brutality, including killings of protesters, filed since August 2020, the regime is promoting and awarding those responsible for these acts;
- E. whereas Lukashenka continues his policy of russification of Belarus, with strategic line towards marginalization and destruction of manifestations of national identity of Belarusians, , including language and culture, by arbitrary arrests, detentions, and especially brutal treatment of cultural figures -- writers, artists, musicians, and in general people who speak Belarusian on public, banning of national s and historical symbols of Belarus, closure of publishing houses, private schools and Belarusian language courses;
- F. whereas the Human Rights Centre Viasna case is facing a series of criminal investigations and charges against, among others, Ales Bialiatski, Valiantsin Stefanovich, Uladzimir Labkovich, Marfa Rabkova, Leanid Sudalenka, Tatsiana Lasitsa and Andrei Chapiuk;
- G. whereas on 17 October 2022 in unprecedentedly harsh sentence in a politically motivated case in Belarus, political prisoner Mikalai Autukhovich was sentenced to 25 years in a high-security penal colony, while 11 other people were sentenced to prison of up to 20 years;

- H. whereas as a result of total crackdown on independent media, the freedom of speech does not exist anymore, with full surveillance of the internet by the regime;
 - I. whereas Belarus is the only country in Europe to use capital punishment, with the latest announcements to carry out executions of political opponents of the regime;
 - J. whereas since 2021 Lukashenka continues the hybrid attacks on the EU by weaponization of migrants and human trafficking; ;
 - K. whereas the Lukashenka regime in Belarus is directly enabling and supporting the Russian military aggression against Ukraine, inter alia, by allowing Russia to attack Ukraine, including through the launch of ballistic missiles from Belarusian territory, enabling the stationing and transport of Russian military personnel, the storing, supplying and transport of military equipment and weapons, including heavy weapons, by allowing Russian military aircraft to fly from and over Belarusian airspace into Ukraine and by providing refueling points;
1. Expresses its full solidarity with the people of Belarus who continue to stand up for a free and democratic country; recognizes the choice of the people of Belarus to elect Ms Sviatlana Tshihanouskaya as the President of the country;
 2. Underlines that the usurper Lukashenka and his entourage should be removed from power and put to trial for their crimes against the people of Belarus;
 3. **Welcomes the creation of the United Transitional Cabinet and transformation of the Coordination Council;** *supports goals of these democratic representations aimed to defend the independence and sovereignty of the Republic of Belarus, carry out the de facto de-occupation of Belarus, restore constitutional legality and the rule of law, develop and implement measures to thwart the illegal retention of power, ensure the transit of power from dictatorship to democracy, and create conditions for fair and free elections, and develop and implement the solutions needed to secure a democratic change in Belarus;*
 4. Strongly condemns the repression, torture and ill-treatment of the peaceful people of Belarus, crackdown on trade unions leaders and the suppression of the media and the internet; continues to call for the immediate and unconditional release of political prisoners and dropping of all charges against persons who peacefully protested or expressed their civic position in accordance with the principles of democracy and were arbitrarily detained and demands an immediate end to the violence and repression; Calls on the Commission to further support independent news outlets, especially new media such as Nexta, which despite broad audience in Belarus, so far has not received any EU financial support;
 5. Denounces the arrest, imprisonment and the upcoming trial of Andrzej Poczobut, a prominent journalist and activist of the Polish minority in Belarus, and demands his immediate release; is concerned with state of his health and strongly demands to provide him with proper medical care; firmly condemns the persecution of the Polish minority in Belarus and recent decisions of the Belarusian authorities aimed at liquidation of

Polish schools and eliminating education in the Polish language, as well as destruction of Polish cemeteries;

6. Demands the unconditional and immediate release of Nobel Peace Prize laureate Ales Bialacki, as well as all others human rights defenders and political prisoners;
7. condemns Lukashenka's efforts to de-root Belarusian culture and rusify the nation; calls on the EU to support Belarusian independent cultural organizations such as theatres, choirs, schools, folk bands, artists and others;
8. welcomes establishing of the Contact Group in the Council of Europe in cooperation with the Belarusian democratic forces and civil society; encourages the EU institutions, Member States and international organizations to formalize cooperation with the democratic representatives of Belarus;
9. Firmly condemns the Russian military's use of Belarusian territory for the aggression against Ukraine; welcomes actions taken by the Belarusian society in opposing the use of the territory of Belarus for the conducting Russian invasion against Ukraine; expresses support to The Kastus Kalinoŭski Regiment fighting against Russian imperialism in Ukraine;
10. Calls for a strict mirroring of sanctions issued against Russia to Belarus and their appropriate application in the case of all future rounds of sanctions;
11. Welcomes support of the EU and Member States, in particular Poland and Lithuania, providing support and protection to the people of Belarus, who were forced to flee the country and calls on the Commission to further back these efforts;
12. Strongly condemns the continued hybrid attack of the Lukashenka regime's on the EU by weaponization of migrants; underlines that Belarus's state-sponsoring of illegal crossings at the EU's external border, coupled with a disinformation campaign, was a form of hybrid warfare aimed at weakening and destabilizing the EU as a prelude to the full scale Russian invasion on Ukraine; expresses strong solidarity with Poland, Lithuania and Latvia, as well as other Member States targeted by the Belarusian regime; reiterates the need for the countries most affected to effectively protect Member States borders, in compliance with relevant international law;
13. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the Council of Europe, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the authorities of the Republic of Belarus and of the Russian Federation, and to the representatives of the Belarusian democratic opposition.