

ORAL QUESTION H-0937/08
for Question Time at the part-session in December 2008
pursuant to Rule 109 of the Rules of Procedure
by Jacek Protasiewicz
to the Commission

Subject: Progress in the negotiations with the Belarusian authorities in the context of possible abuse of the criminal code against political and civil activity

Having in mind the declaration by Mr Aleksandr Lukashenka in the interview for the *Wall Street Journal* that he is ready to free all political prisoners;

In view of the fact that Mr Alyaksandr Barazhenka is being held in custody pending his trial for the January demonstration, despite his voluntary appearance at the Minsk city police department on 27 October for questioning, and is not allowed to face the charges without being kept in custody, which would be a common practice in democratic countries;

Following similar cases, as well as the sentences of restricted freedom imposed on the other opposition activists in Belarus;

Is the Commission aware of this situation? Has the Commission already called on the Belarusian authorities for an immediate release of Mr Barazhenka and a review of similar cases? If not will the Commission make this issue one of the subjects of its negotiations with the representatives of the Belarusian Government?

Tabled: 24.11.2008
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