

Priority question for written answer P-003609/2023

to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

Rule 138

Andrzej Halicki (PPE)

Subject: EEAS action in support of Mikalai Statkevich and other political prisoners in Belarus

Mikalai Statkevich is one of the leaders of the Belarusian democratic opposition to the Lukashenka regime and a popular Belarusian politician. Recent media reports about the possible death of Mikalai Statkevich in a Belarusian prison run by the Lukashenka regime is another warning to democratic Europe and confirms the seriousness of other tragic cases and of the situation of political prisoners in Belarus, whose family members, lawyers and the international community have not been able to contact.

The fact is that neither Mikalai's family nor his lawyer – or indeed anyone else – has had any contact from Mikalai for the last nine months. The life of all democrats in Belarus is at risk; any political prisoner can lose his life at any time and the families of political prisoners are subjected to constant harassment and intimidation.

Members of the European Parliament have repeatedly drawn the attention of the Commission and the Council to these situations in plenary debates and in numerous resolutions, including those of 13 September 2023, 11 May 2023, 15 March 2023 and 24 November 2022. In view of the above, I address the following questions to the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy:

1. Is the High Representative aware of the conditions in which detainees are being held – and which have frequently been raised in Parliament – such as Mikalai Statkevich, Palina Sharenda-Panasiuk, Siarhei Tsikhanouski, Viktor Babaryka, Maksim Znak, Ihar Losik, Andrei Poczobut, Maria Kalesnikava and Ales Bialiatski?
2. Could the High Representative and the EU administration help Mikalai Statkevich's family to arrange a short video call or prison visit with Mikalai?

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