

Parliament slams repression and show trials in Belarus

- The Belarusian regime must end its crackdown on dissenting voices
- The EU needs to broaden its sanctions against Minsk
- EU countries should prepare court cases against Belarusian officials involved in human rights violations

MEPs are alarmed about the ongoing crackdown in Belarus, including the jailing of Nobel laureates and journalists, and call for further sanctions against the country.

On Wednesday, Parliament adopted a resolution condemning the Belarusian regime's continued systematic repression of the country's people and dissenting voices, including through politically motivated and closed-door show trials, which MEPs slam as grave human rights violations. Parliament firmly denounces the recent sentencing to long jail terms of journalist Andrzej Poczobut and Nobel Peace Prize laureate Ales Bialatski, as well as several other people. These convictions show the regime's efforts to suppress all civic engagement in defence of human rights and all independent media in the country.

MEPs also condemn the long prison sentences handed out *in absentia* to exiled Belarusian opposition leader Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya and other figures on the country's Coordination Council, a body that has worked to facilitate a democratic transfer of power in Belarus following the fraudulent presidential elections in 2020.

Belarus as an accomplice in Russia's aggression against Ukraine

Calling for all those unjustly jailed to be freed and compensated, Parliament reiterates its strong condemnation of Belarus' involvement in Russia's war against Ukraine. Referring to the Belarusian regime as an accomplice to [the Russian state sponsorship of terrorism](#), MEPs are disappointed the country was not included in the EU's recent 10th sanctions package on Russia. They want tough restrictive measures against Minsk that comprise the inclusion, among other things, of the potash sector on the EU's sanctions list, as it serves as the main source of the Belarusian regime's income.

Broaden EU sanctions against Minsk

MEPs urge the EU and its member states to broaden and strengthen EU sanctions against Belarus, and to include all those complicit in the regime's repression, including judges, prosecutors, and law enforcement, prison and penal colony officials and ensure the proper enforcement of restrictive measures. They also condemn the intensive harassment and persecution of Belarusian trade unions by the regime, as well as the crackdown on national minorities through the closure of schools and destruction of heritage.

The resolution also underlines the need for a comprehensive investigation into the crimes committed by the Lukashenko regime against the people of Belarus, while calling on EU countries to actively apply the universal jurisdiction principle and prepare court cases against Belarusian officials.

Boost ties between the EU and the Belarusian democratic forces

The text welcomes the establishment of the "[Mission for Democratic Belarus](#)" in Brussels and calls on the EU institutions to support the Mission and the so-called "People's Embassies of Belarus", as well as on Parliament to formalise ties between MEPs and Belarusian democratic forces.

Further information

[The adopted text will be available here \(15.03.2023\)](#)

[Watch a video recording of the plenary debate \(16.02.2023\)](#)

[The European Parliament's delegation for relations with Belarus](#)

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