Statement

Belarusian National Platform
Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum

23.06.2022

On June 23, 2022 Minsk Regional Court sentenced political prisoner, philosopher, methodologist and public figure Vladimir Matskevich to 5 years of reinforced regime imprisonment. Vladimir Matskevich, who has been in custody since August 4, 2021, is charged under three articles of the Criminal Code:

- Art. 342 part 1 of the Criminal Code (active participation in the group actions that grossly violate the public order),
- Art. 361-1(1) (establishment of an extremist formation),
- Art. 368 part 1 (insulting Lukashenko).

We consider the verdict to be unjust and politically motivated persecution, open fight against dissent, as well as demonstrative deprivation of the right to vote, pressure and coercion to renounce one's human rights, public or political activities.

It is difficult to overestimate the importance of Vladimir Matskevich's role in the formation and development of Belarusian civil society and Belarusian philosophical and humanitarian thought. Philosopher and methodologist Vladimir Vladimirovich Matskevich is the author of the formula "Think Belarus", the founder of Agency of Humanitarian Technologies, the first head of the Council of the international consortium "EuroBelarus", the founder of the "Flying University". Vladimir Matskevich was at the origins of the Belarusian National Platform (BNP) and the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum (EaP CSF). His works and ideas have long been used by BNP and EaP CSF. Vladimir Matskevich has devoted a number of his books, lectures, and articles to the development of civil society in Belarus.

We urge the international community: EU countries, international institutions, diplomats and civil society to pay public and political attention to the sentence and detention of Vladimir Matskevich and the situation of thousands of other political prisoners in Belarus as an unacceptable and vicious practice of political repression against the Belarusian opponents of the regime.