



**Appeal to the United Transitional Cabinet and the Coordination Council,
democratic forces and civil society of Belarus**

Minsk

15 August 2022

On 8-9 August 2022, the conference «New Belarus» with participation of representatives of Belarus' democratic forces and civil society took place. At this Conference, Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya announced the creation of the United Transitional Cabinet (hereinafter referred to as the Cabinet) as a collective executive body of democratic forces¹.

The head of the Cabinet, as it is clear from the announcement, is the leader of democratic Belarus S. Tsikhanouskaya. She appointed: Pavel Latushko, head of the National Anti-crisis Management, a member of the Presidium of the Coordination Council, to be representative of the Cabinet on the transit of power; Alexander Azarov, head of BYPOL, to be representative of the Cabinet on law and order restoration; Valeriy Kovalevsky, head of the Cabinet of S. Tsikhanouskaya's representatives, to be representative of the Cabinet on foreign affairs; Valeriy Sakhshchik – to be representative of the Cabinet on defense and national security.

The purposes of the activity of the Cabinet are: protection of the independence and sovereignty of the Republic of Belarus; representation of Belarus' national interests; implementation of its actual deoccupation; restoration of constitutional legitimacy and rule of law; to work out and to implement measures aimed at eliminating the illegal retention of power; to provide the transit of power from dictatorship to democracy; creation of conditions to carry out fair and free elections; to work out and to execute decisions needed to achieve democratic changes in Belarus.

S. Tsikhanouskaya also declared that the Coordination Council is going to be re-launched as a representative body. According to the announcement, the candidates who are to be part of the Cabinet should undergo the procedure of approval by a representative body, which is, by all appearances, the Coordination Council (hereinafter referred to as CC). More detailed meaning of the reform of the CC is revealed in the statement of the Coordination Council on the reform d/d 09 August 2022 on its official Telegram channel². In particular, it says that the reform is meant, «to include in the work of the CC a bigger number of representatives of democratic forces and civil society. Representation will be widened thanks to the fact that structures of democratic forces and civil society will nominate their delegates and through cooptation of independently self-nominated persons». Also, it is said that the CC «will approve

¹ Sakhshchik, Latushko, Azarov, Kovalevsky: Tsikhanouskaya announced the United Interim Office and named its first members, 09 August 2022//Statement of Svetlana Tsikhanouskaya's official web-site, <https://tsikhanouskaya.org/ru/events/news/d22479169597509.html>

² Reform of the Coordination Council, August 09th//Statement of the official Telegram channel of the Coordination Council, https://t.me/rada_vision/2589



the procedure of widening and updating its structure, as well as the new quantity of its members by September 1st».

The appointment of the Cabinet and the declared reform of the Coordination Council make us carefully optimistic; we do hope that such decisions can lead to bigger cohesion of democratic forces.

The Belarusian National Platform of the Civil Society Forum of the Eastern Partnership and the EaP Civil Society Forum were one of the first structures representing civil society's interests that published their official statements in which they supported the recognition of the powers of the CC and those of S. Tsikhanouskaya as representatives of the Belarusian people.

At the same time, in the statements on the Cabinet and the reform of the CC, there are a number of not answered questions, and we ask the **United Transitional Cabinet** to answer them publicly, in particular:

- What powers will the **United Transitional Cabinet** possess?
- What is the Cabinet going to do in order to achieve the declared purposes during the next 6 months?
- What results are supposed to be achieved exactly?
- Does the **United Transitional Cabinet** have a general strategy of actions, which (or its part) can be presented publicly?
- What differentiation of powers is there between the Cabinet as an executive body and the reformed Coordination Council as a representative body, as well as between them and Svetlana Tsikhanouskaya's Office? What are the structure and the mechanism of relations between these bodies?
- How the powers are differentiated between the Cabinet and the structures that are also represented by its members, namely: Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya's Office, National Anti-crisis Management, and BYPOL?
- Will decisions of the Cabinet be obligatory for the structures that are also represented by its members, namely: Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya Office, National Anti-crisis Management, and BYPOL?
- Are there any mechanisms of securing mutual obligations and responsibility for the nonfulfillment of decisions?
- What is the way the executive apparatus of the Cabinet will be formed? Is it meant to be formed by uniting the executive structures of the Office of Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, the National Anti-crisis Management, and BYPOL?
- What other organizations, structures, and/or initiatives of civil society have declared their support to the activity of the **United Transitional Cabinet** and that they are going to follow its decisions?

We also express our concern because of the absence of a clear procedure of widening the Coordination Council at the expense of deputation of new members from structures of democratic forces and civil society. We would like to be sure that the procedure of widening the Coordination Council is actually a way of expanding its representativeness.

We draw your attention to the fact that bona fide representation of Belarus' civil society organizations cannot be provided by the procedure of selecting separate civil society



organizations that are asked to nominate their delegates to the structure of the Coordination Council or by the procedure of cooptation of civil society's separate representatives.

Therefore, a more correct decision would be:

- To send an open appeal to the civil society of Belarus with a proposal to delegate a required number of its representatives to the structure of the Coordination Council;
- To confer powers upon civil society to develop and to accept open and transparent procedures of nominating delegates, with the requirement to secure their safety;
- We think that Belarusian civil society organizations should be offered to define the mechanisms and procedure of such deputation to the CC, which will then be coordinated with the Coordination Council;

A really more democratic order of forming the CC, bigger legitimacy and representativeness of the CC itself, and the CC's implementation of the national interests of the Belarusian people and Belarusian civil society on the way towards freedom and democracy will be achieved in this case only.

The Coordinating Committee of the BNP of the EaP CSF, uniting more than 85 pro-European Belarusian organizations and structures <https://npbelarus.info/>