



EMERGENCY STATEMENT

of Coordinating Committee of the Belarusian National Platform of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum

Human rights defenders and independent journalists in Belarus under attack

Minsk

16.02.2021

From morning of Tuesday, February 16, 2021, in Belarus began searches and detentions of human rights defenders and journalists.

Searches took place in the human rights center Viasna, the public association Belarusian Association of Journalists (BAJ), the independent trade union REP and member of the BNP Coordination Committee Nikolai Kvantaliani. At the moment, there are more than 40 human rights defenders and journalists in Minsk, Mogilev, Brest, Vitebsk and Gomel on the lists of those who have been or have been searched.

According to the information available at the moment, the searches were carried out as part of a criminal case under Art. 342 of the Criminal Code of Belarus (Organization and preparation of actions that grossly violate public order, or active participation in them).

In connection with the foregoing and based on the Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms*¹

- We demand an end to the persecution and pressure on human rights defenders and journalists in Belarus;
- We appeal to the UN structures and urge to take immediate response measures, in accordance with all special procedures to protect human rights defenders and journalists;
- We appeal to the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum and ask for the maximum dissemination of information about the human rights situation, the situation of human rights defenders and journalists, and take measures to comprehensively support the democratic structures of the Belarusian civil society.

We call on representatives of embassies and international organizations to publicly express their condemnation of the most recent episode of repressions against Belarusian human rights defenders and civic activists, and to use all possible means to stop the persecutions and violations of human rights;

The Belarusian National Platform of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum is the leading platform for cooperation of Belarusian civil society organisations in the field of interaction with the countries of the European Union and the Eastern Partnership. It unites more than 90 organisations and initiatives of civil society in Belarus. Founded in July 2010.

¹ Adopted by General Assembly resolution 53/144 of 9 December 1998

