

URGENT ACTION

DEMAND RELEASE OF BELARUSIAN ACTIVISTS

Among the 30 people detained for taking part in and organizing the demonstration in Minsk on 19 December, two, Natallya Radzina, and Syargei Vaznyak, have been released under bail conditions. Two more, Uladzimir Nyaklyayeu and Iryna Khalip, are now under house arrest. Alyaksandr Atroshchankau has been added to the list of prisoners of conscience.

Natallya Radzina wrote on the Charter website, an opposition news website, after her release: "I am free only because of you. Because of each human rights activist, each politician or journalist who supported me even just with words, it is thanks to your support and your prayers. I am no mythological hero; together you are a huge uncrushable force, capable of influencing events." Syargei Vaznyak commented on the prison conditions: "I was not being targeted. It was bad for everyone. The detention centre is overcrowded. It is not right that in the 21st century, people who are suspects, and may still be acquitted are kept in such conditions."

Uladzimir Nyaklyayeu was brought home to his flat at 10.35 pm on 29 January and was able to say to journalists: "Thank you very much to all! I am grateful for the support". **Iryna Khalip** was able to return home to her son Danil and her parents.

The conditions of the house arrest under which Iryna Khalip and Uladzimir Nyaklyayeu are living are draconian. There are two KGB officers living in their flats at all times, they are not allowed to leave their flats, open the door, approach the windows or make phone calls. Amnesty International considers such conditions to be equivalent to imprisonment and considers that they are still prisoners of conscience.

Amnesty International has been able to confirm that **Alyaksandr Atroshchankau**, the press secretary of Andrei Sannikov, is a prisoner of conscience. It is likely that other detainees, about whom Amnesty International has not yet been able to gather enough information, are also prisoners of conscience.

PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Belarusian, Russian or your own language:

- Calling on the Belarusian authorities to immediately and unconditionally release all 14 prisoners of conscience, who are being either in detention or under house arrest, listing their names as given overleaf;
- Calling on the Belarusian authorities to drop the charges against all 14 prisoners of conscience listing their names, as well as the charges against Natallya Razina, Syargei Vaznyak, Vital Rymasheusky, Anatol Paulau and Aleg Korban;
- Reminding Belarus that as a state party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, it has an obligation to guarantee freedom of expression and assembly to all on its territory, and that anybody prosecuted for the legitimate and peaceful expression of their political views will be considered a prisoner of conscience
- Urging the authorities to ensure that all those detained have confidential access to a lawyer, medical assistance and contact with their families.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 14 MARCH 2011 TO:

President

Alyaksandr Lukashenka
Administratsia Prezidenta Respubliki Belarus
ul.Karla Marksa, 38
220016 Minsk
BELARUS

Fax: +375 17 226 06 10/ +375 17 222 38 72

Email: contact@president.gov.by

Salutation: Dear President Lukashenka

Prosecutor General

Grigory Alekseevich Vasilevich

Internatsionalnaya str. 22

220050 Minsk

BELARUS

Fax: +375 17 226 42 52

Salutation: Dear Prosecutor General

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the third update of UA264/10. Further information: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/EUR49/001/2011/en>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

There are now 14 prisoners of conscience:

Presidential candidates: Alyaksei Mihalevich, Mykalau Statkevich, Uladzimir Nyaklyayeu and Andrei Sannikau

Journalists: Alyaksandr Atroshchankau, the press secretary of Andrei Sannikov, Iryna Khalip correspondent for the Russian newspaper Novaya Gazeta,

Political commentator: Alyaksandr Fyaduta

Opposition activists: Pavel Sevyarynets an opposition activist and member of Vital Rymasheusky's campaign team, Anatol Lyabedka a member of the United Civic Party, Uladzimir Kobets, a member of Alyaksandr Sannikov's campaign team, Zmitser Bandarenka, the coordinator of the opposition European Belarus campaign, Alyaksandr Arastovych, and Syargei Martseleu, members of Mykalau Statkevich's campaign team, and Anastasiya Palazhanka, the deputy leader of the Young Front movement.

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