

URGENT ACTION

HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER RELEASED

Belarusian human rights defender Nasta Loika was released on 6 October after spending 30 days in arbitrary detention on trumped up charges of “petty hooliganism”. The authorities have also closed a separate criminal investigation she was facing and lifted the travel ban that had been imposed on her.

NO FURTHER ACTION IS REQUESTED. MANY THANKS TO ALL WHO SENT APPEALS.

Human rights defender **Nasta Loika** has been released on 6 October after spending 30 days in detention. She was arbitrarily detained on 6 September as she was leaving the Minsk City Court after attending the hearing where human rights defenders Marfa Rabkova, Andrei Chapyuk and their eight co-defendants were handed lengthy prison sentences on fabricated charges. On 7 September, Nasta Loika was sentenced to 15 days in detention, purportedly for “petty hooliganism”, a violation under Article 19.1 of the Code of Administrative Offences. Nasta Loika has committed no crime and she is being targeted in retaliation for her work. On 22 September, the Frunzenski District Court of Minsk sentenced her again to 15 days in detention on the same charges.

During her detention Nasta Loika was denied access to her lawyer and refused necessary medical treatment, and basic necessities, including warm clothes and drinking water.

Nasta Loika is a prominent human rights defender and educator, focusing on human rights violations resulting from the repressive anti-extremist legislation in Belarus, the protection of foreign citizens and stateless persons in Belarus, and on human rights education. This is not the first time that Nasta Loika has faced persecution for her human rights activism – since August 2021 she had been a suspect in a criminal case related to the activities of the Human Rights Center Viasna. The authorities have now dropped this investigation and lifted a travel ban imposed on her but she remains a witness in this case.

While we welcome these news, Nasta Loika should have never been detained. As do many human rights defenders in Belarus, she remains at risk of further prosecution due to her human rights work.

NAME AND PRONOUN: Nasta (Anastasia) Loika (she/her)

THIS IS THE SECOND AND FINAL OUTPUT FOR UA 85/22

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/eur49/6061/2022/en/>

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