



## **HRC46: Item 2 - Enhanced Interactive Dialogue - Belarus**

Video statement

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Madam President.

This is a joint statement on behalf of HRHF & Amnesty International.

Belarus' human rights situation further deteriorated in February. When combined with the High Commissioner's report indicating "long-standing, chronic patterns of systemic violations and impunity", it demands establishing a new mechanism on Belarus.

Amidst continued broader persecution, latest developments include raids on some of the country's most respected organisations, including Viasna and the Belarusian Association of Journalists, the detention of dozens of human rights defenders, the sentencing of two female journalists to a penal colony for two years, and the torture and sentencing of Mikita Zalatarou, a child, to five years' imprisonment. Some of our Belarusian colleagues have gone into hiding fearing criminal charges, themselves.

In addition, the criminal investigation into the Office for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, effectively for cooperation with the UN's Office in Minsk, shows Belarus' continued contempt for the UN and its working methods, beyond its intransigent non-cooperation with the Special Rapporteur on Belarus, the High Commissioner's reporting, and the recommendations of the UN Treaty Bodies.

Together with Belarusian civil society organisations, we call on the Council to create a mechanism assisting the process of accountability that includes:

1. Complementarity with existing regional and civil society-led initiatives to document serious violations;
2. An ability to collect, preserve and analyse violations, and where possible to identify those responsible;
3. A mandate to provide guidance and recommendations on access to justice and accountability.

Thank you.