



Amnesty International Belarus: Public Appeal

5 January 2007, AI Index: EUR 49/001/2007

Prisoner of Conscience: Alyaksandr Kazulin

Amnesty International is calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Alyaksandr Kazulin, leader of the Belarusian Socialist Democratic Party, *Hramada*, former presidential candidate and former rector of the Belarusian State University, who has been in prison since June 2006. The organization believes that Alyaksandr Kazulin is a prisoner of conscience, and that his continuing imprisonment is a violation of his rights to freedom of assembly, association and expression.

Amnesty International asserts that Alyaksandr Kazulin is being detained unlawfully, following a flagrantly unfair trial. The charges brought against Alyaksandr Kazulin, for which he is serving a five-and-a-half-year prison sentence, are a blatant pretext by the Belarusian authorities aimed at intimidating Alyaksandr Kazulin and obstructing his lawful political activities.



Furthermore, the organization is calling for the Belarusian government to conduct full and impartial investigations into reports of ill-treatment suffered by Alyaksandr Kazulin on various occasions at the hands of law enforcement officials, and to ensure that he receives full redress.

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Background

Alyaksandr Kazulin was charged, under the provisions of the Belarusian Criminal Code, with "hooliganism" (article 339, part 2) and with "the organization of group activities that breach public order or active participation in similar activities" (article 342, part 1). The prosecutor called for Alyaksandr Kazulin to be sentenced to a total of six years' imprisonment, three years on each charge. On 13 July 2006, a Minsk district court sentenced him to five and a half years' imprisonment.

Amnesty International monitored the Belarusian authorities' treatment of Alyaksandr Kazulin, members of his electoral campaign team, his family and his lawyer during the period of the March 2006 presidential elections. On various occasions, activists from his electoral headquarters were harassed, detained and beaten and had equipment seized by the security forces.

Amnesty International believes that the continuing harassment and detention of opposition figures, and those involved in civil society activity generally, is a deliberate attempt by the authorities to intimidate and deter people from exercising their rights to freedom of assembly,

association and expression. The result is the continued stifling of open, public debate and civil society activity within Belarus.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Please send cards or letters of support and solidarity to Alyaksandr Kazulin in prison. You can write in Belarusian, Russian, English or your own language. Your good wishes will be an invaluable source of support at this difficult time. If you would like to, you can send these messages in Belarusian:

I am thinking of you:	Я думаю пра цябе
We are thinking of you:	Мы думаем пра цябе
I am wishing you well:	Я жадаю табе добра
We are wishing you well:	Мы жадаем табе добра

Please send your greetings to:

**Alyaksandr Kazulin
IK No. 3
Vitsba
211300 Vitsebsk region
Belarus**

Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible to the Belarusian authorities, in Belarusian, Russian, English or your own language:

- calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Alyaksandr Kazulin as a prisoner of conscience;
- reminding the Belarusian authorities of their obligations under Articles 19, 21 and 22 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Belarus is a state party, which guarantee the rights to freedom of expression, assembly and association;
- urging the Belarusian authorities to stop the obstruction, harassment and intimidation of civil society activists engaged directly or indirectly in the promotion and defence of human rights in Belarus;
- calling for full and impartial investigations by the Belarusian authorities into reports of ill-treatment suffered by Alyaksandr Kazulin at the hands of law enforcement officials and to ensure that he receives full redress.

Please fax or send your appeals to:

President

Alyaksandr G. LUKASHENKA
ul. Karla Marxa 38
220016 Minsk, BELARUS
Fax: +375 172 26 06 10, +375 172 22 38 72
Salutation: Dear President Lukashenka

Procurator General

Petr P. MIKLASHEVICH
ul. Internatsionalnaia 22
220050 Minsk, BELARUS
Fax: +375 172 26 41 66
Salutation: Dear Procurator General

Minister of Internal Affairs

Vladimir V. NAUMOV
ul. Gorodskoi Val 4
220615 Minsk, BELARUS
Fax: +375 172 26 12 47
Salutation: Dear Minister