



HRC57 – Interactive Dialogue with the Independent Experts on Belarus

BENELUX Statement

(September 23 2024)

Thank you, Mr. President.

I speak on behalf of Belgium, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, and Luxembourg. We align with the EU statement.

We thank the group of independent experts for their inaugural presentation and reiterate our strong support for your mandate.

We restate our condemnation of the continuous violations of freedom of expression and association in Belarus, that have effectively led to the closure of any civic space and deprived the population of their ability to exercise their fundamental rights.

We are alarmed by the Belarussian authorities attempt to give their brutal repression and harassment of their own population a veneer of legitimacy by adapting their legal framework including through the creation and the systemic use of vague and overly broad counter-terrorism and counter-extremism legislation, but also by the abolition of the ban on security forces using weapons indiscriminately against crowds, including women, children, and people with disabilities, while granting immunity to the responsible security forces.

We remain gravely concerned by the situation of over 1300 political prisoners that face particular harsh detention conditions, often in punitive isolation cells and the numerous reports of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, including sexual and gender-based violence. These acts continue to be perpetrated with impunity and with the approval of the highest authorities

We call on the authorities of Belarus to immediately release all prisoner held on political grounds, amongst others, Ales Bialiatski, Marfa Rabkova, Andrei Chapiuk, Nasta Loika.

Independent experts,

Could you further elaborate on the harassment and repression faced by Belarussians in exile?

Thank you.

(256 words - 1m30s)

