



**Statement
of the Belarusian National Youth Council of the “RADA”
in connection with brutal politically motivated detentions of participants of peaceful
assemblies in Belarus.**

Minsk

25.06.2020

We, the union of twenty seven democratic youth organizations of Belarus, created with the purpose of consolidating of youth organizations and initiatives of Belarus for representation, promotion and defending common interests, exercising right to freedoms of association and other constitutional rights, represented by the Governing Body – the Board of “RADA”, make the following statement:

We note with great concern a gigantic increase of aggression in society, caused by numerous violations and barriers from authorities to the people of Belarus in realization of their rights and freedoms during electoral campaign 2020.

We pay special attention to the fact that young people make up a significant part of the participants of [peaceful assemblies](#) in Belarus. We are proud and glad that Belarusian youth is actively seeking opportunities for a peaceful and democratic demonstration of their views. And we protest against aggressive, disproportionate and undemocratic methods used by the Belarusian authorities and their supporters.

At the same time, despite the statements of the [RADA](#), [Belarusian](#) and [international](#) organizations adopted in May and caused by the previous wave of repressions, Belarusian authorities did not stop neglecting the rights and freedoms of citizens but began to apply even larger range of repressive tactics, including manipulative ideological methods in this list and mass detentions of participants of peaceful and permitted assemblies.

We regret that young people are becoming victims of ideological propaganda and political manipulation and are actively provoked to act aggressively. So, young people, who participated in the picket to collect signatures for nomination of a candidate Lukashenko, [attacked and blocked the work](#) of Radio Liberty journalists.

Especially rude and cynical is politically motivated persecution of the owners of the store [symbal.by](#), which promotes national culture and is popular among young people. After many inspections by state agencies, the store announced closure on June 29th. People who came to buy goods and support its owners were [dispersed by riot police](#), and [protocols on an administrative offense](#) for [an unauthorized mass event](#) were drawn up on detained people.

We are frustrated by the fact that in his public speeches the President of Belarus A. Lukashenko does not consider Belarusian youth a full-fledged subject of public life. For example, [appealing to parents](#) with calls to stop civil peaceful activity of youth, calling it illegal.

We are also concerned with politically motivated persecutions of representatives of presidential candidates' headquarters during the collection of signatures. As a result of a [provocation in](#)

Grodno on May 29, 10 people from the headquarters of Svetlana Tikhanovskaya were detained, including the head of her headquarters and husband Sergey Tikhanovsky. The authorities detained another candidate, Viktor Babariko, on June 18, along with his head of his headquarters and son Eduard Babariko.

We consider these detentions to be politically motivated, and it was obvious political background of the repression of presidential candidates that led to the manifestation of solidarity in the Belarusian society and peaceful street assemblies.

Considering all mentioned, we express our support to all participants of peaceful assemblies in Belarus who openly exercise their rights, and also express solidarity with those who were detained for political reasons.

We express our protest against violation of human rights and the disproportionate use of force by officers of the internal affairs bodies against participants of peaceful assemblies in Belarus.

We urge Belarusian authorities to release immediately detained of participants of peaceful assemblies and declare administrative penalties unlawful.

We call on Belarusian authorities to release immediately representatives of the presidential candidates' headquarters detained on politically motivated grounds; and to ensure holding of fair and democratic elections according to international standards.

We urge officers of the internal affairs bodies, especially OMON, to fulfill their duty and guarantee freedom of expression and peaceful assembly in Belarus, according to the rule of law, respecting the Rules of Professional Ethics of the employees of the internal affairs bodies, in particular, do not execute a deliberately criminal order. Orders, which legitimacy is in doubt, should only be given in writing.

We urge Belarusian judges to conduct impartially administrative cases of detainees of peaceful meetings.

We urge the Belarusian Republican Youth Union, administrations of educational institutions, state media and other involved persons to stop transmitting distorted information to young people and do not provoke them to aggressive actions regardless of personal beliefs.

We ask international partners of our country in Europe, Asia and other regions of the world to raise questions about human rights and the situation of youth in Belarus and to link a progress on these issues with possible cooperation between countries.

We appeal to international structures, including the International Monetary Fund, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the World Bank, the European Investment Bank to connect cooperation projects with Belarus with the progress in the implementation of human rights by people living in Belarus.

We urge the United Nations to express its position to the ongoing violations of rights and freedoms in Belarus, and to make a call on Belarusian authorities to fulfill their international obligations in accordance with the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.