



**Statement of the
Belarusian National Youth Council "RADA"
in connection with the criminal persecution of students and
political repression of citizens of the Republic of Belarus**

Minsk

13.05.2021

We, the Union of twenty-eight democratic youth organizations of Belarus, were established to consolidate Belarusian youth civil society organizations to represent, promote and protect common interests, exercise the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and other constitutional rights, represented by the governing body – the Council of RADA, make the following statement:

On November 12, representatives of the State Security Committee of the Republic of Belarus launched an investigation against members of the student organization "Belarusian Students' Association", as well as other active students. The organization's office, the apartments and dormitories of the young people were searched. Their computers, mobile phones and documents were confiscated. A total of 12 people were detained and charged in this case: 10 students, 1 teacher and 1 graduate – a member of the main composition of the Coordinating Council.

The accused spent more than six months in prison, and on May 14 the trial of the "student case" in which the accused are: Yana Arabeyka, Alana Gebremarijam, Ksenia Syramalot, Kasya Budko, Gleb Fitzner, Anastasia Bulybenko, Ilya Trakhtenberg, Egor Kanetsky, Victoria Grankovskaya, Maria Kalenik, Tatiana Ekelchik, Olga Filatchenkova. They are all recognized as political prisoners.

They are accused of "organizing group actions that grossly violate public order and are associated with blatant disobedience to the lawful demands of the authorities, which led to disruption of institutions and transport, from August to November 2020 in Minsk".



We believe that these detentions, as well as the [criminal and administrative persecution of people](#) since May 2020, are politically motivated and violate the freedoms and rights guaranteed by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Constitution of the Republic of Belarus. We see these actions as a continuation of the [government's oppression against youth and the youth sector](#) and remind that human rights are not internal issues of any country.

In this regard, we:

Express our support to all those who non-violently defend their rights, and we also express solidarity with the politically motivated persecution of students and other young people.

Demand an immediate end to the criminal case and the release of the following defendants: Jan Arabejka, Alan Gebremarij, Ksenia Syramalot, Kasya Budko, Gleb Fitzner, Anastasia Bulybenko, Ilya Trakhtenberg, Egor Konetsky, Victoria Grankovskaya, Maria Kalenik, Tatiana Yakelchik, Olga Filatchenkova.

Support the Declaration of Independent Students and demand an end to political persecution and guarantee the freedom of activity of public associations, student and trade unions, political parties, and peaceful assemblies.

Call upon the European Youth Forum, as well as National Youth Councils and International Youth Organizations to express support and solidarity with Belarusian youth.

Call upon the representatives of embassies and international organizations to publicly condemn the political persecution in Belarus and to further request the Belarusian authorities to release all political prisoners, as well as to disseminate information about political prisoners in Belarus.

Call upon the Special Rapporteurs and UN Rapporteurs to use every opportunity of their mandates to take immediate effect in order to end the pressure on human rights defenders and civil society activists in Belarus.



Call on the World Bank to suspend the joint project with the Ministry of Education until all political prisoners are released, and we further call to create conditions for public oversight of the project.