



Statement

Of the Belarusian National Youth Council 'RADA' in connection with the politically motivated hijacking of a Ryanair aircraft in the airspace of the Republic of Belarus

Minsk

24.05.2021

Yesterday the whole World witnessed and was very worried about the fate of more than 100 passengers of the Ryanair aircraft of Athens - Vilnius direction. It was flying on a route within the EU but was intercepted in the airspace of Belarus and stayed at the Minsk National Airport for 7 hours. All this time, people have been held hostage by a regime that systematically violates human rights, and the fate of two young people are still in jeopardy.

We condemn politically motivated hunting by the state authorities of Belarus on people and the risk to the lives of citizens of other countries. We are very worried about the consequences for the detainees Roman Protasevich (26 years old) and Sofia Sapega (23 years old) in Belarus. So far, their families and lawyers have not been given the opportunity to meet, and there is no information at all about Sofia: where is she, what are the grounds for her detention and what is her status.

We remind you that Belarusian authorities included Roman Protasevich in the list of organizations and individuals involved in terrorist activities. In this regard, Protasevich faces at least up to 15 years in prison.

Moreover, Roman is a colleague and friend of political prisoner Ihar Losik, who has been in prison for almost a year (since June 25, 2020) and who was tortured. We are sure that Roman will also be tortured to obtain witnesses about the information channels in which he was involved. This is extremely unacceptable and is prohibited by a number of international documents that Belarus must comply with.

Yesterday's actions of the Belarusian authorities once again showed the World that the current political regime in Belarus does not respect human rights and acts



contrary to international agreements, destroying its credibility inside the country and abroad.

In this regard, we:

- Strongly protest against any actions of Belarusian authorities that endanger the lives of citizens.
- Demand from ICAO an international investigation into the incident and fair punishment within it.
- Demand the release of Roman Protasevich and Sofia Sapega and transport them to Vilnius.
- Demand that the state bodies of Belarus comply with international agreements.

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