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06 October 2011

In support of Ales Bialiatski, Belarus Human Rights Defender

Written declaration No. 497

This written declaration does not reflect the position of the Assembly; only of those members that have signed it. It will not be considered further by the Assembly.

Following the wave of repression in the aftermath of the presidential elections, the situation of human rights and civil and political liberties has deteriorated dramatically in Belarus. Trumped up criminal charges, searches, interrogations and smear campaigns have been launched against political activists and human rights defenders.

Ales Bialiatski, leader of the Human Rights Centre Viasna, was arrested on 4 August 2011 and may face up to seven years imprisonment purportedly for income tax evasion. The severe restrictions on freedom of association in Belarus and the impossibility for independent organisations to register and to receive funds from abroad seriously impeded the work of Viasna and jeopardised its efforts to assist victims of political repression.

Ales Bialiatski is a victim of political harassment and is clearly being prosecuted for his civic activities. The so-called "tax evasion" charges are a pretext for the government to eliminate a courageous opponent of the Lukashenko regime.

As members of the Parliamentary Assembly attached to the fundamental principles of democracy, rule of law and human rights, we will monitor the proceedings against Ales Bialiatski and other opponents of the regime with special interest, while at the same time demanding the release of all political prisoners in Belarus.

Signed (see overleaf)



*Signed*¹:

HERKEL Andres, Estonia, EPP/CD
AGRAMUNT Pedro, Spain, EPP/CD
ALIGRUDIĆ Miloš, Serbia, EPP/CD
BACQUELAINE Daniel, Belgium, ALDE
BADEA Viorel Riceard, Romania, EPP/CD
BADRE Denis, France, ALDE
BECK Marieluise, Germany, ALDE
BRASSEUR Anne, Luxembourg, ALDE
CANEL Sylvia, Germany, ALDE
CEDERBRATT Mikael, Sweden, EPP/CD
CIRCENE Ingrida, Latvia, EPP/CD
CLUNE Deirdre, Ireland, EPP/CD
DIŞLİ Şaban, Turkey, EPP/CD
DORIĆ Miljenko, Croatia, ALDE
FLANAGAN Terence, Ireland, EPP/CD
FOŘT Stanislav, Slovak Republic, ALDE
FRITZ Erich Georg, Germany, EPP/CD
FRUNDA György, Romania, EPP/CD
GARDETTO Jean-Charles, Monaco, EPP/CD
GHILETCHI Valeriu, Republic of Moldova, EPP/CD
GRAHAM Sylvi, Norway, EPP/CD
HANSON Margus, Estonia, ALDE
HOLOVATY Serhiy, Ukraine, ALDE
HÜBINGER Anette, Germany, EPP/CD
JOHANSSON Mats, Sweden, EPP/CD
KALMÁR Ferenc, Hungary, EPP/CD
KANDELAKI Giorgi, Georgia, EPP/CD
KOVÁCS Elvira, Serbia, EPP/CD
KUBATA Václav, Czech Republic, EPP/CD
KUBOVIČ Pavol, Slovak Republic, EPP/CD
LUNDGREN Kerstin, Sweden, ALDE
MAISSEN Theo, Switzerland, EPP/CD
MANZONE-SAQUET Nicole, Monaco, EPP/CD
MARQUET Bernard, Monaco, ALDE
MARTY Dick, Switzerland, ALDE
MATUŠIĆ Frano, Croatia, EPP/CD
MAYER Edgar, Austria, EPP/CD
MIGNON Jean-Claude, France, EPP/CD
MUNTEANU Valeriu, Republic of Moldova, ALDE
NAGHDALYAN Hermine, Armenia, ALDE
NEGELE Gebhard, Liechtenstein, EPP/CD
PALIHOVICI Liliana, Republic of Moldova, EPP/CD
PELKONEN Jaana, Finland, EPP/CD
POSTANJYAN Zaruhi, Armenia, EPP/CD
POURBAIX-LUNDIN Marietta, de, Sweden, EPP/CD
POURGOURIDES Christos, Cyprus, EPP/CD
RACHOŃ Janusz, Poland, EPP/CD
REPS Mailis, Estonia, ALDE
RUMMO Paul-Eerik, Estonia, ALDE
SAAR Indrek, Estonia, SOC
SASI Kimmo, Finland, EPP/CD
SCHÄDLER Leander, Liechtenstein, EPP/CD
SCHOU Ingjerd, Norway, EPP/CD
SCHUSTER Marina, Germany, ALDE
SOBOLEV Serhiy, Ukraine, EPP/CD

1. ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party
SOC: Socialist Group

STAVROSITU Maria, Romania, EPP/CD
TOSHEV Latchezar, Bulgaria, EPP/CD
VAREIKIS Egidijus, Lithuania, EPP/CD
VIROLAINEN Anne-Mari, Finland, EPP/CD
VOLONTÈ Luca, Italy, EPP/CD
WOHLWEND Renate, Liechtenstein, EPP/CD
ZELLER Karl, Italy, EPP/CD
ZINGERIS Emanuelis, Lithuania, EPP/CD

Total = 63