Parliamentary Assembly
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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The persecution of Poles in Belarus and the sentencing of Andrzej Poczobut in a show trial to 8 years in prison by a Belarusian court

Written declaration No. 765

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.

We, the undersigned, declare the following:

The Belarusian authorities have been carrying out activities aimed at Poles in Belarus for years. Representatives of the Polish minority in Belarus are persecuted, Polish cultural heritage is being destroyed. In addition, Belarusian propaganda repeats the Russian message, trying to discredit and slander Poland in the eyes of Belarusians. The culmination of the Belarusian authorities' repression against the Polish minority in Belarus was the show trial of journalist Andrzej Poczobut. In this political trial, the Minsk regime accused Andrzej Poczobut of "inciting hatred" and "acting to the detriment" of Belarus by calling for sanctions. On 8 January 2023, he was sentenced by the Belarusian regime court to 8 years in a penal colony with a strict regime. Since his arrest on 21 March 2021, he has not been able to see his family. Moreover, political prisoners are tortured and kept in inhumane conditions.

We call on the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, the Committee of Ministers and member States to act for the immediate and unconditional release of Andrzej Poczobut and other activists of the Union of Poles and to support for all initiatives that contribute to the democratisation of Belarusian public life both in the diaspora and in Belarus.

Signed (see overleaf)

Signed[1]*:*

MULARCZYK Arkadiusz, Poland, EC/DA
ÅBERG Boriana, Sweden, EPP/CD
ABRAHAM Knut, Germany, EPP/CD
ARENT Iwona, Poland, EC/DA
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BRABANDERE Bob, De, Belgium, EC/DA
DECROIX Eva, Czech Republic, EC/DA
DZINTARS Normunds, Latvia, EC/DA
GADIRLI Erkin, Azerbaijan, EC/DA
GALLES Paul, Luxembourg, EPP/CD
GEORGIEV Georg, Bulgaria, EPP/CD
GONCHARENKO Oleksii, Ukraine, EC/DA
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HENGEL Max, Luxembourg, EPP/CD
KALCHENKO Serhii, Ukraine, EC/DA
KHOMENKO Olena, Ukraine, EC/DA
KONSTANKEVYCH Iryna, Ukraine, EC/DA
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MEREZHKO Oleksandr, Ukraine, EC/DA
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MODERT Octavie, Luxembourg, EPP/CD
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POCIEJ Aleksander, Poland, EPP/CD
SOBOLIEV Serhii, Ukraine, EPP/CD
SÓJKA Katarzyna, Poland, EC/DA
TAMAŠUNIENĖ Rita, Lithuania, EC/DA
WIECHEL Markus, Sweden, EC/DA

Total = 28

1. EC/DA: European Conservatives Group and Democratic Alliance
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party