

Appeal of the Georgian Civil Society Representatives regarding Human Rights Violations in Belarus

The Georgian civil society representatives express their deep concern about the ongoing human rights violations in Belarus.

On 19 December 2010 thousands of Belarus citizens gathered on October Square in Minsk to express their opinion regarding the Presidential elections. Later they moved to the Independence Square. According to the Amnesty International:

"A small group of young men standing by the doors to the parliament building armed with batons, their faces covered with scarves started to call on the demonstrators to storm the building. They broke down the doors and broke windows after which riot police sought to disperse the entire demonstration.

Eye witnesses stated that opposition leaders called on the demonstrators to remain peaceful. They also reported that the police beat demonstrators and journalists with batons".

The demonstration was dispersed violently. Over two hundred demonstrators were beaten allegedly by the police. Hundreds of them were detained and they faced administrative penalties. Infringement of fair trial rights were reported in these cases.

Several presidential candidates and the members of their staff were also detained and the criminal cases were launched against them. Some of the detainees were denied access to the lawyers. According to the reports, the health condition of the two detained opposition presidential candidates - Mr. Uladzimir Niakliaeu and Mr. Andrei Sannikau - remains alarming. According to the Amnesty International, Mr. Sannikau's legs appear to be broken and his brain might also be damaged.

We, the Georgian civil society representatives, call upon the Belarus government:

- To investigate the alleged disproportional use of force by the police;
- To ensure that no one is detained against the law;
- To provide that the detainees have access to a lawyer;

- To guarantee fair trial rights to those detained;
- To respect the detainees' right to physical integrity;
- To investigate thoroughly the health damages caused to Mr. Sannikau and Mr. Niakliaeu and bring those responsible to justice.

We call upon the Georgian government to condemn the grave human rights violations occurring in Belarus.

We call upon the Georgian civil society to actively follow further developments in Belarus.

Georgian Young Lawyers' Association

International Society for Fair Elections and Democracy

"Open Society Georgia" Foundation

Multinational Georgia

Human Rights Center

Article 42 of the Constitution

December 29, 2010

Tbilisi, Georgia