



Embassy of the Republic of Belarus in the
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Situation in Belarus - LO statement

The Swedish Trade Union Confederation (LO) is following closely and with great concern the current situation in Belarus, after recent presidential elections. LO takes notice that the Belarusian authorities released the trade unionists detained for having taken part in peaceful protests against falsified elections, notably Nikolai Zimin, former chairman of the Belarusian Independent Trade Union and Maxim Sereda, chairman of the UMTO the Independent Trade Union of Miners. LO still supports the demands of the people of Belarus, Belarusian independent trade unions and civil society.

LO denounces:

- The fraudulent conduct of the elections; main opposition candidates were harassed and not allowed to compete, while Dictator Alexander Lukashenko - in power since 1994 - was declared winner despite clear evidence that the majority of population voted against him.
- The use of force to suppress any discontent of people, as well as against peaceful protesters across the country, including arrests and detention of citizens.
- The suppression of internet and media, road blockades, detentions and intimidation of journalists in order to stop the flow of information about the situation in the country, and to prevent public discussion and any collective response to the electoral fraud.
- The persecution of workers who exercise their human right to suspend their work in protest.

LO calls on Belarusian authorities to:

- Immediately stop any violence and take to justice all the officials responsible for excessive use of force against peaceful demonstrators.
- Engage in dialogue with the opposition in order to launch a new electoral process, under the supervision of the Election Committee that can be trusted by all the parties, including international observers.
- Ensure that internet connection is promptly restored, roads are deblocked, and journalists can freely do their work to inform the population about the situation in the country and outside.

The Swedish trade union movement jointly urges the European Union to convene an urgent EU Summit to assess the Belarusian authority's actions and review the EU relations with Belarus. This includes the reintroduction of commensurate sanctions for electoral fraud and violence as well as reconsidering cooperation with the country, including within the Eastern Partnership. Strengthening support to Belarusian civil society - including independent unions - and stopping any EU financial support to the government and state-controlled projects - including through multilateral development banks - must also be urgently addressed.

LO is supporting:

- People of Belarus, who clearly expressed their choice and wish for political change.
- Independent unions of Belarus, the largest democratic and independent civil society movement.
- Labour, civil society and human rights activists who joined in protests against state capture, fraud and suppression of freedoms by the regime.

Yours sincerely,

The Swedish Trade Union Confederation (LO)



Susanna Gideonsson
President