
Belarus: Babaryka sentenced to 14 years in prison. Stano (EU), “release him immediately along with the other 530 political prisoners”

“Today, Belarus has over 530 political prisoners, hundreds of documented instances of torture, and continued repression against all segments of society to silence all dissent and ill treatment in detention centres. The Lukashenko regime clearly violates international human rights that it has committed to uphold”. In a statement released today, Peter Stano, spokesperson for the EU External Action Service (EEAS), laments the news of Viktor Babaryka being sentenced to 14 years in prison. The latter has been “held in detention since 18 June 2020, for the sole reason to have tried to exercise his political right to stand as a candidate in the presidential elections in August 2020”. The EU calls for his “immediate and unconditional release” and that of “all political prisoners, detained journalists and people who are behind bars for exercising their fundamental rights”. “The regime must halt repression and injustice and hold perpetrators to account”, the statement reads, for what is called “the brutal repression by the Belarusian authorities”. “Serious human rights violations come at a price”, and the EU stands ready to consider further sanctions. What is needed, however, is “a comprehensive and genuine political dialogue with representatives of the democratic opposition and civil society, facilitated by the OSCE, leading to new free and fair elections”.

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