



**European Movement
Mouvement Européen**

Press Release

Resolution of the European Movement International on the conviction of the Belarusian opposition leaders, Mikola Statkevich and Paval Sevyarynets.

-No one can imprison the freedom of thoughts! –There is no other way than freedom and democracy for Belarus!

The European Movement International condemns the new and massive wave of fundamental rights violations in Belarus and calls for civil and political support for the establishment of freedom and democracy in that country.

The decision of the Belarusian court, which convicted the opposition leaders Mikola Statkevich, initiator of the European Movement Belarus, and Paval Sevyarynets for "violating public order" and sentenced them to three years of compulsory labor, is a new but completely futile attack against freedom and democracy by the last dictatorial regime in the geographic centre of the European continent.

Despite more than 1500 arbitrary arrests, the closing down of 60 NGOs, and the doubling of the number of political prisoners in such a short period of time, the coming democratic developments in Belarus cannot be held up. Imprisoned opposition leaders such as Mikhail Marynich (president of the European Movement Belarus), Valery Levaneuski, Alyaksandr Vasilyeu, Yuri Bandazheuski, Andrei Klimov, Syarhei Skrabets, Mikola Statkevich and Paval Sevyarynets are the symbols of courage, freedom of thought and expression, as well as being clear signals to the international community of the urgent need for their unambiguous support.

The EMI calls on the Belarusian authorities to free all political prisoners and to ensure that all their future actions are strictly in accord with the international human rights commitments. Belarusian citizens have the right to live freely and without fear of threats or reprisals from government officials or agents.

The EMI calls on the international community and in particular, on the European Parliament Committee on External Policies and Human Rights and on the corresponding European Commissioners Mrs. Ferrero-Waldner to take immediate action in support of the establishment of democracy and the rule of law in Belarus.

EMI Resolution adopted on the 11th of June 2005 at the Federal Council held in Luxembourg.

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