



## SOLIDARITET MED BELARUS

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927 562 553

Oslo, 11. januar 2023

- I. Justis- og beredskapsminister Emilie Enger Mehl (*Minister of internal affairs*)
- II. Utenriksminister Anniken Huitfeldt (*Minister of foreign affairs*)
- III. Utenriks- og Forsvarskomiteen (*Parliamentary committee on foreign affairs*)

Norway has a responsibility as a host nation to protect Belarusians from unnecessary harm caused by political persecution by the current regime. Norway should also assist the Belarusian diaspora in preserving their language and political organization to support their future return to their homeland as contributors to the construction of a democratic society.

Lukashenka has stated that he considers dissidents to be traitors, and has enacted legislation to enable persecution and harsh punishments - including long-term imprisonment, heavy fines, confiscation of private property, annulment of Belarusian citizenship (rendering dissidents stateless), - and potentially capital punishment. Belarus retains the death penalty. Enforcement of these laws appears to be purposefully arbitrary as a means for terrorizing the population, leading to well-grounded concern and justified anxiety regarding the real risks posed to citizens who have not already been notified by the Lukashenka security apparatus. Strict prison sentences are pronounced for minor "offenses", like 'Insulting the president' in an online comment. For some it is a risk even to approach a Belarus consulate.

### UNDERSTAND THE RISK OF VISITING BELARUS

Consult the United Nations Human Rights Council Special Rapporteur on Belarus and the Belarusian Human Rights Center 'Viasna' on a regular basis to understand the evolving risks associated with traveling to Belarus for persons who have expressed dissident beliefs.

### PROVIDE SOLUTIONS FOR INVALID BELARUSIAN PASSPORTS

Renewal of an invalid passport can only be done in Belarus, we therefore recommend that the Norwegian state (A) allows Belarusian citizens to extend their residency permits despite holding an expired passport, and (B) issues suitable temporary identification and travel documentation to avoid unnecessary bureaucratic situations which violate human dignity. Additionally, in the spirit of Fridtjof Nansen (C) a temporary passport should be issued to any stateless Belarusians deprived of their citizenship through dictates issued by Lukashenka.

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