



BNP recommendations for Gymnich meeting of foreign affairs ministers.

Minsk

27.08.2020

Belarusian National Platform of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum expresses its full confidence in the Coordination Council¹, initiated by Svetlana Tikhonovskaya, and supports its demands.

We believe that the only way out of the political crisis is negotiations with the authorities. These negotiations can only take place between the legitimate representatives of the protesters, namely the Coordination Council, and the Belarusian authorities.

We see the importance to obtain guarantees of non-interference in the internal affairs of Belarus from the main geopolitical players. The external mediation, either from Russia or from the EU or OSCE, in our opinion, will create much more problems than will help in resolving the political crisis.

EU-Russia joint mediation group could be a possible option, but the composition and the mandate of such a group should be agreed with the Coordination Council as well as with the authorities.

Russia demands non-interference from the EU, but de facto, supports Lukashenka, already having a noticeable presence in the Belarusian information space. The EU should firmly demand from Russia symmetric guarantees of non-interference and the withdrawal of its political consultants and information troops.

If the EU and Russia want to help resolve the crisis, then it is necessary by any means to persuade the authorities to start the negotiations on the resolution of the crisis. Including, if necessary, personal guarantees of immunity for Lukashenka and the possibility for his safe departure.

Civil society emergency needs:

1. Human Rights
 - Immediate release of all political prisoners.
 - Investigation on tortures and street violence with inclusion of HR Defenders.
2. Humanitarian needs
 - Cover fees for arrested people on healthcare, lawyer, destroyed equipment.
 - Clear visa procedure and Humanitarian corridor to travel abroad for those who need urgent evacuation or asylum in neighbourhood countries due to repressions.

¹ <https://rada.vision/>





3. Media

- Increase support of existing independent Media for broader coverage.
- Encourage Media to hire colleagues who sacked from state media.

4. Education

- Solidarity payments / scholarships abroad for expelled students.
- Solidarity payments / scholarships abroad for sacked academicians.
- Support education programs for retraining / professional reorientation who was fired or voluntary left the civil service.
- Support program for education digitalization due to COVID - 19 (including, educational institutions, universities, schoolers, students, teachers, professors)

5. Health

- Psychological and physical rehabilitation for victims of torture and street violence.
- Psychological and physical rehabilitation for victim's of torture and street violence relatives.

6. Support for the volunteer's initiatives and movements:

- To support coordinators of the volunteer's initiatives and movements, many of whom are now working full-time and have no income.
- To support public campaigns (to print campaign materials as well as for targeted promotion in social networks, for example, to help workers in strikes.
- To support research and analysis of the current situation, including express-analysis, including express-opinion polls of particular target groups (groups of protesters, workers, ect.).
- capacity building of the voluntary initiatives.

7. Environment:

- To demand from the Belarusian authorities to suspend the launch of the Belarusian nuclear power plant in Ostrovets until the internal political situation in Belarus will be normalizes

