

18 December 2019

Joint Statement of the Coordination Committee of the Belarusian National Platform of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum and the Board of the EU-Russia Civil Society Forum

"On the lack of transparency in the processes of deep integration of the Republic of Belarus and the Russian Federation.

Based on the following

- [Statement](#) by the Steering Committee of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum on the occasion of the EaP CSF Annual Assembly "On ensuring the rights of citizens and the threat of loss of sovereignty of the Republic of Belarus" of 4 December 2019,
- [Statement](#) of the Coordinating Committee of the BNP EaP CSF of 25 September 2019 in connection with the beginning of the development of a package of documents of the Programme of Action of the Republic of Belarus and the Russian Federation for the implementation of the Treaty on the Establishment of the Union State,
- [Resolutions](#) of the BNP EaP CSF Conference of 26 January 2019 "On Strengthening the Threats to the Independence of the Republic of Belarus

The Steering Committee of the BNP EaP CSF and the Board of the EU-Russia Civil Society Forum point out that:

- Lack of transparency, possibility of access of civil control to the content and development of documents on further integration of the Republic of Belarus and the Russian Federation
- Stark inequality of the parties in the negotiation process and Belarus' dependence on Russia.

The processes of development of integration documents and negotiations between the officials of the Republic of Belarus and the Russian Federation are taking place against the background of the formation in November 2019 of a new parliament in the Republic of Belarus, the elections of which were not recognized as free and democratic by international and national observation missions. The practice of politically motivated administrative arrests and criminal proceedings to prosecute civic activists continues in Belarus and Russia, with significant restrictions on the right to peaceful assembly, freedom of association and freedom of expression, including on the Internet.

In connection with the above, we call on the Belarusian and Russian authorities to ensure transparency and inclusiveness in the process of deep integration negotiations, establish a mechanism to ensure full access to the process of integration and take into account the views of citizens of Belarus and Russia, and call on the international community to facilitate the implementation of these conditions.