
Lt.-Gen. Ivan Kubrakou
Minister of the Interior
Vul. Haradski Val 4
Minsk 220030
BELARUS

_____ 2024

Dear Minister,

As a member/sympathizer of ACAT-Switzerland, I write to demand public information about prisoner of conscience **Maryia Kalesnikava**, who has been denied contact with the outside world for over a year and whose deteriorating health and safety have been of grave concern. I am particularly alarmed that she has been kept incommunicado for over 500 days and that her imprisonment conditions amount to torture and other ill-treatment and are putting her life at risk.

As you are undoubtedly aware, Maryia Kalesnikava was arrested on 7 September 2020 and later sentenced to 11 years in prison following an unfair trial on politically motivated charges of "extremism", "attempting to seize power", and "calls for actions harming national security". Since February 2023, she has been denied all contact with the outside world and has been regularly placed in punishment cells (SHIZO, PKT) for extended periods. Throughout this time, she has been confined to a small, enclosed space, prohibited from communicating with other prisoners, and allowed only 30 minutes a day outdoors.

Maryia Kalesnikava suffers from ulcer and other serious health conditions which have worsened due to these inhumane conditions, and she has been denied necessary medical care. Confidential reports indicate that her health is in serious decline and that she has lost significant weight.

Maryia Kalesnikava is a prisoner of conscience, detained solely for her role in challenging the results of the disputed 2020 presidential election and participating in peaceful protests. She must be immediately and unconditionally released.

Belarus, as a State party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT), is obligated to uphold these treaties, which prohibit torture or ill-treatment. The cumulative practices to which Maryia Kalesnikava is subjected amount to torture and are in direct violation of the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (Mandela Rules). Additionally, Article 9 of the ICCPR prohibits arbitrary arrest and detention and guarantees the right to a fair trial.

In light of the seriousness of her situation, I respectfully urge you to:

- **take all necessary measures to ensure the immediate and unconditional release of Maryia Kalesnikava;**
- **guarantee that, pending her release, she is no longer held incommunicado or subjected to torture or other ill-treatment;**
- **pending her release, provide her with appropriate medical care and ensure that the conditions of detention are in accordance with the Mandela Rules.**

Yours sincerely,

	Full Name	Address	Signature
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Petition to the Belarusian Minister of the Interior, Lt.-Gen. Ivan Kubrakou

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ACAT-Switzerland is a politically neutral and independent human rights organisation affiliated to the International Federation of ACAT (FIACAT), which has consultative status with the United Nations, observer status with the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights and participatory status with the Council of Europe.