

## Kalinowski Forum

**Vincent Kanstancin Kalinoŭski** (Belarusian: Ві́нцэ́нт Канстанці́н Каліно́ўскі), also known as Wincenty Konstanty Kalinowski (Polish) and Konstantinas Kalinauskas (Lithuanian) was a 19th-century writer, journalist, lawyer and revolutionary of the occupied Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. He was one of the leaders of the Lithuanian, Polish and Belarusian national revival and the leader of the January Uprising in the lands of the former Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. He was imprisoned in Vilnius, where he wrote one of his most notable works – the “Letter from Beneath the Gallows” (“*Pismo z-pod szybienicy*”), a passionate credo for his compatriots that inspires the whole region today<sup>1</sup>. He was then tried by a court martial for leading the revolt against Russia and sentenced to death. He was publicly executed in Lukiškės Square in Vilnius on 22 March 1864, at the age of 26. The remains of the executed insurgent, along with others, were clandestinely buried by the Tsarist authorities on the site of the military fortress on top of the Gediminas Hill in Vilnius. The remains were excavated in 2017, and positively identified in 2019, and subsequently solemnly re-interred in Rasos Cemetery on 22<sup>nd</sup> of November, 2019.

**The Kalinowski Forum** is a round-table of the best world leaders and experts on the future of Belarus as a part of the European family, established in Vilnius on 24 August 2020. The first Forum event was attended by many high-level political figures, including U.S. Deputy Secretary of State, Stephen Biegun, as well as leading academics on Belarus and Eastern Europe. The participants expressed their great support for the Belarusian opposition and freedom fighters, and encouraged firm resistance to the repression of the illegitimate Belarusian regime and anti-democratic support of the Russian Federation. The Forum was supported by the Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Vilnius University, European Humanities University and other NGOs, which significantly contributed to creating an international coalition for Belarusian freedom.

The next annual conference is to be held **on 22 March 2021** to honour the cause of this Belarusian revival hero and continue his mission in the current context, according to the goals set by democratic Belarusian leader, Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya: a) to achieve an inclusive national dialogue; b) to ensure a safe transfer of power, and c) to hold free and fair elections. The second part of the conference will address the following questions: a) what our coalition has accomplished since August 2020; b) what our plan to achieve the main goal – free and democratic elections under the auspices of the OSCE – is; c) how we can bring our goals in line with the new American Administration’s initiative – a global Summit for Democracy.

The Kalinowski Forum serves as the key platform for Belarusian freedom fighters and dissidents, political leaders of international democratic community to express their opinions, develop common strategies to fight the Russian aggression in the region and restore democracy in Belarus. The Forum is organised by the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania (Lithuanian Parliament) in cooperation with Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya’s Office in Vilnius, Lithuanian-German Forum, International Republican Institute, Swedish International Liberal Centre (SILC) Vilnius Office, ForumCiv, Freedom House, Institute of International Relations and Political Science and Eastern Europe Studies Centre.

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<sup>1</sup> “Friends, my brothers! From under the Russian gallows I am writing to you for the last time. It is sad to leave my native land and you, my dear people. My breast sighs and my heart is sore, but it is not a sad lot to perish for your truth. Hear my last words in sincerity, my people, for it is as if they were written from this world only for your good ... as day and night do not reign together, so also true learning does not go together with Russian slavery. As long as this lies over us, we shall have nothing. There will be no truth, no riches, no learning. They will only drive us like cattle not to our well-being, but to our perdition.... go and fight with the whole people for your human and national rights, for your faith, for your native land. For I say to you from beneath the gallows, my people, you will only then live happily, when no Russian remains over you!” *Kastuś Kalinoŭski, commentaries by Jan Zaprudnik and Thomas E. Bird: The 1863 Uprising in Byelorussia: "Peasants' Truth" and "Letters from Beneath the Gallows". Byelorussian Institute of Arts and Sciences, The Krecheuski Foundation, New York, 1980.*

Monday, 22 March 2020

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9:30 REGISTRATION

**10:00 OPENING OF THE CONFERENCE** (Venue: Constitution Hall, Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, Gedimino pr. 53)

WELCOME

**H.E. Ms Viktorija Čmilytė-Nielsen**

Speaker of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania (in-person)

**H.E. Ms Ingrida Šimonytė**

Prime Minister of the Republic of Lithuania (in-person)

**Ms Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya**

Leader of democratic Belarus (in-person)

**H.E. Mr Vytautas Landsbergis**

President of the Supreme Council – Reconstituent Seimas (in-person)

Moderator

**Mr Žygimantas Pavilionis**

Chair of Seimas Committee on Foreign Affairs,  
Chair of Seimas Group “For a Democratic Belarus”

**10:30 REFLECTIONS ON SUPPORTING BELARUSIAN FREEDOM: WHAT HAVE WE ACCOMPLISHED SO FAR?**

(The Belarusian people are heroically continuing their resistance and active protests, but the regime is intensifying its repression, resulting in hundreds of casualties and thousands of people injured or imprisoned. Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya has become the main ambassador and leader of the Belarusian nation, recognised by many democratic leaders. She has initiated the creation of the Belarusian diplomatic representations network. The international community has imposed individual sanctions; more sectoral sanctions are being considered. The EU has adopted a Global Magnitsky Act. We continue to support the Belarusian democracy, however, our assistance is facing more and more challenges in reaching the freedom fighters. The objective of the increasing repression is to completely suppress and silence the protesters, together with the financial support of the Kremlin which is trying to *de facto* annex the country. There are even signs that some democratic governments are recognising the illegitimate Lukashenka's regime, which has drastically restricted Lithuanian, Polish and other allies' diplomatic efforts in Belarus. Lukashenka and Putin are trying to “freeze” the situation and eventually establish a “managed democracy” model. We have reached a critical point. New, free and legitimate democratic elections are our main and imperative goal. Otherwise, the international democratic community and the Belarusian nation may lose a historic window of opportunity. Much more needs to be done in order to promote the Belarusian fight for liberty and democracy. This panel will try to produce constructive insights by identifying the key challenges and possibilities towards a more efficient and sustainable support for free elections in Belarus and its opposition.)

KEYNOTE

**Mr David McAllister**

Chair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, European Parliament (online)

SPEAKERS

**Mr Uladzimir Niakliaeu**

Coordinator of the Belarusian National Congress (in-person)

**Mr Anatol Liabedzka**

CEO of the European Dialogue Center (in-person)

**Mr Ales Beliatiski**

Belarusian Civic Leader, Founder of the Human Rights Centre “Viasna” (in-person)

**Mr Vytis Jurkonis**

Director of Freedom House in Lithuania (in-person)

11:30 COMMENTS

**Mr Rihards Kols**

Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Latvian Saeima (online)

**Mr Marko Mihkelson**

Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Estonian Riigikogu (online)

**Mr Marek Kuchciński**

Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Polish Sejm (online)

**Mr Pavel Fischer**

Chair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs,  
Defence and Security of the Parliament of the Czech Republic (online)

Moderator

**Dr Margarita Šešelgytė**

Director of the Institute of International Relations and  
Political Science, Vilnius University

12:00 DISCUSSION

12:30 LUNCH

13:30 WHAT'S THE PLAN: FREE AND DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS IN 2021?

(Can we mobilise the international democratic community to achieve our main goal – free and democratic Belarusian elections in 2021 under the auspices of the OSCE? Are we able to collectively convince Putin to step down from the shameful repression of his own people and their liberty, from supporting the illegitimate Lukashenka's regime which is ruining Belarus' future and from using OSCE to “freeze” the situation, defer real change through trivial constitutional amendments, and to start supporting free and democratic elections? How are we preparing for such elections? Can we effectively oppose the “managed democracy” model and help Belarusians in creating a vibrant democratic civil and politically active society, which would be able to face the challenges of democratic and economic reforms on its own?)

KEYNOTE

**H.E. Josep Borrell**

Vice-President of the European Commission, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (video address)

**H.E. Peter Lord Bowness**

President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (online)

SPEAKERS

**Mr Matthias Lüttenberg**

Head of Division Bilateral Relations with the States of Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, Central Asia and Southern Caucasus of the German Federal Chancellery (online)

**Mr Pierre Vimont**

Former Executive Secretary-General of the European External Action Service (EEAS),  
Senior Fellow at Carnegie Europe (online)

**Mr Tom Tugendhat**

Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee, UK House of Commons (online)

**Ms Julie Fisher**

U.S. Ambassador to Belarus (online)

**Mr Dirk Schuebel**

Ambassador of the European Union to Belarus (online)

**Mr Kenneth G Forslund**

Chair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Swedish Riksdag (online)

**Mr Michael Gahler**

Member of the European Parliament, EPP Group (online)

**Mr Žygimantas Pavilionis**

Chair of Seimas Committee on Foreign Affairs and Seimas Group “For a Democratic Belarus” (in-person)

**Mr Michał Tomasz Kamiński**

Deputy Marshal of the Senate of the Republic of Poland (in-person)

**Mr Franak Viacorka**

Senior Advisor to Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya (in-person)

**Mr Oleksii Goncharenko**

Member of the Ukrainian Verkhovna Rada, Head of the All-Party Parliamentary Group “For a Democratic Belarus” (in-person)

Moderator

**Mr Petras Auštrevičius**

Member of the European Parliament,  
EP Special Rapporteur on Belarus

15:00 DISCUSSION

15:30 COFFEE BREAK & PRESS CONFERENCE

16:00 SUMMIT OF DEMOCRACIES: BELARUS AND EASTERN EUROPE IN FOCUS

(The new U.S. Administration has pledged to return democracy to the centre of its foreign policy. In exactly the same way, the previous Administrations of Reagan, Bush and Clinton had initiated great historical shifts in uniting Europe and millions of people became safe and free. Will the new Administration finalise the “Europe Whole and Free” project? Will these important goals become not only words but also actions in the Eastern Europe, where the oldest dictatorship in Europe, or, as Timothy Snyder called it, the historical “bloodland of bloodlands”, is at the moment trying to get rid of its illegitimate and repressive regime? The Belarusian nation has arguably suffered the most of all the nations in Europe from the totalitarian regimes. Can the new U.S. Administration unite forces with Europe and the Belarusian nation to open a path to liberty? How will the Biden Administration change and provide opportunities for Europe? What are the geopolitics of the great Belarusian fight for freedom?)

KEYNOTE

**Mr George P. Kent**

Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, U.S. Department of State (online)

SPEAKERS

**Mr Robert Menendez**

U.S. Senator, Ranking Member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee (video address)

**Mr Chris Smith**

Congressman, Senior Member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee (video address)

**Dr Michael Carpenter**

Managing Director of the Penn Biden Center for Diplomacy and Global Engagement,  
Senior Fellow at the Atlantic Council (online)

**Ms Anna Fotyga**

Member of the European Parliament, ECR Group,  
Member of the NATO Reflection Group, Former Foreign Minister of Poland (online)

**Mr Sven Spengemann**

Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development, Canadian House of Commons (online)

**Mr Mantas Adomėnas**

Vice-Minister of the Republic of Lithuania (in-person)

**Mr Marcin Przydacz**

Under Secretary of State for Security, the Americas, Asia and Eastern Policy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of  
the Republic of Poland (online)

**Mr Carl Gershman**

President of the National Endowment for Democracy (online)

**Mr Stephen Nix**

Eurasia Director, International Republican Institute (online)

**Mr David Kramer**

Senior Fellow, Florida International University, Former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for  
Democracy, Human Rights and Labour (online)

**Mr Jamie Fly**

President of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (online)

**Mr Vladimir Kara-Murza**

Member of Russian Opposition, Chairman of the Boris Nemtsov Foundation and Vice President of the Free  
Russia Foundation (in-person)

**Mr Emanuelis Zingeris**

Member of Seimas Committee on Foreign Affairs, Signatory of Lithuanian Independence (in-person)

Moderator

**Mr Žygimantas Pavilionis**

Chair of Seimas Committee on Foreign Affairs,  
Chair of Seimas Group “For a Democratic Belarus”

17:00 DISCUSSION

17:30 CONCLUDING REMARKS

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**Mr Žygimantas Pavilionis**

Chair of Seimas Committee on Foreign Affairs and Seimas Group “For a Democratic Belarus”