

**SEIMAS OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**STATEMENT
ON ALEXANDER LUKASHENKA'S ILLEGITIMATE RULE IN BELARUS**

27 January 2025 No 105-P-8
Vilnius

The Committee on Foreign Affairs of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania,

recalling that Belarus has been under the authoritarian rule of Alexander Lukashenka for over 30 years now,

having regard to the fact that since 1994 and, in particular since the fraudulent Belarusian presidential elections in 2020, the people of Belarus have been subjected to brutal violence and systematic repression by Lukashenka's unlawful regime; the freedom of speech and assembly have been completely suppressed; political opponents and critics have been silenced, imprisoned, or even gone missing; while the pro-democratic opposition and Belarusian protesters of 2020 have been forced to flee the country due to persecution and threats,

emphasising that the human rights situation in Belarus has not improved, as the regime has been holding around 1 250 political prisoners in prison, further exerting repression against civil society and non-governmental organisations, persecuting independent media outlets and journalists under the guise of allegations of extremism, while the online spread of disinformation and censorship by the regime serve to reinforce digital authoritarianism and restrict citizens' access to free and fair elections,

condemning the complicity of the Lukashenka regime in Russia's war against Ukraine, the deliberate integration of Belarus into the Russian sphere of influence in the form of a union state, and the assistance to Russia in attempts to destabilise not only the security in the European Union and NATO, in the Eastern Member States in particular, but also the security in Europe as a whole, also by instrumentalising migration at the EU's external borders, and in attempts to undermine the European aspirations of EU's neighbouring countries,

expressing its full support for Belarusian civil society, the democratic forces, and their leader Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya,

reiterates its non-recognition of the election of Mr Lukashenka as President of Belarus and the presidential election spectacle on 26 January 2025, which completely failed to meet any

international standards of democratic elections in terms of freedom, fairness, and transparency, and **considers** potential future spectacles of a similar nature in Belarus as falsification of the will of the electorate and attempts to legitimise dictatorial rule;

notes that Lukashenka's authoritarian regime is illegitimate, unlawful and criminal;

stresses that Belarusian sovereignty belongs to the Belarusian people and that any attempts by the Lukashenka regime to integrate the country with Russia have been, and will continue to be, considered unlawful;

calls on the international community, acting in multilateral fora, to maintain the policy of total isolation of the Belarusian authoritarian regime, to make every effort to support the aspirations of the Belarusian people for democracy, freedom, the rule of law and human rights, and to ensure accountability of the Lukashenka regime for the crimes it has committed;

stresses the importance of targeted sanctions and their consistent implementation as well as the inevitability of full accountability for war crimes in Ukraine and other serious international crimes in which the Lukashenka regime is complicit, including the prosecution of Lukashenka himself and other members of his regime before an international tribunal;

fully supports the Belarusian democratic forces led by Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya and the Belarusian civil society in their efforts for a democratic and European future for Belarus, for democratic change, free and democratic elections, the unconditional release of all political prisoners, and support for the civil society, journalists, representatives of non-governmental organisations, and human rights activists living and working both in exile and inside the country;

calls on the representatives of the Belarusian democratic forces to foster and strengthen the unity of the Belarusian people;

appeals to the parliaments and governments of the EU Member States and NATO member countries to take the following steps:

- 1) deny recognition of Lukashenka as the legitimate leader of Belarus;
- 2) demand that the Lukashenka regime immediately and unconditionally release and rehabilitate all political prisoners, end political persecution, ensure accountability for human rights violations, and cease collaboration with Russia in the war against Ukraine;
- 3) increase pressure on the Lukashenka regime by expanding and strengthening sanctions against sectors and entities financing the regime, contributing to the military industry, and

repressing Belarusian civil society, in order to curb their illegal activities and electoral fraud and limit the regime's ability to contribute to Russia's war against Ukraine;

4) support the Belarusian democratic forces led by Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, strengthen their legitimacy, ensure full backing for democratic initiatives in Belarus, and allocate additional financial resources to strengthen the civil society, including support for independent media outlets in Belarus and their activities abroad.

Chair of the Committee

Remigijus Motuzas