



## **Resolution**

# **On the EU Foreign Affairs Council conclusions of 15 February 2016 on non-extending restrictive measures for the Republic of Belarus**

COUNCIL OF MEMBERS/  
EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
BRUSSELS, BELGIUM, 15-16 APRIL 2016

## **The European Youth Forum,**

Having considered the recent developments in Belarus, notably:

- the EU Foreign Affairs Council conclusions on non-extending sanctions against Belarusian officials responsible for politically motivated reprisals and violence used against Belarusian citizens in the course of the presidential election campaign in 2010;
- the continued pressure exerted on Belarusian students and student non-governmental organisations, the violation of student rights and freedoms, restrictions on the right to peaceful assembly and freedom of expression;
- the exclusion of Belarusian democratic youth organisations from agendas of European organisations and institutions that target youth policy development in Belarus, as well as from their work and activities that imply direct participation of representatives of youth civil society organisations;
- the lack of change in oppressive state laws and practice, namely in Article 193.1 of the Penal Code of the Republic of Belarus that establishes criminal penalty for acting on behalf of unregistered organisations; in restrictions on the right to peaceful assembly; in complicated procedures for registering non-profit organisations or foreign aid received by such organisations;

**observes** the improvement in relations between the European Union and the Republic of Belarus, as signified by the EU Foreign Affairs Council conclusions of 15 February 2016 on non-extension of sanctions and restrictive measures for a number of Belarusian officials and companies,

**realises**, however, that there has not been a significant democratic change in Belarus, where the authorities have not ceased their systematic harassment of those who attempt to practice their individual, civil, political, and other rights. Neither have the authorities shown willingness to reform the entrenched and highly oppressive legal system,

**Therefore, the European Youth Forum and its member organisations,**

**Condemn** continuous violations, harassment, administrative procedures and the practice of fines exercised by state authorities against human rights activists, youth activists, students, journalists, and other citizens, as [stated](#) by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Belarus.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Statement by the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Belarus, Miklós Haraszti. No changes in the dismal human rights situation in Belarus since the presidential election. Geneva, 9 February 2016

**Condemn** infringement of academic freedom, the oppression of students, persecution of student activists, violations of the right of peaceful assembly – a fundamental student right enshrined in the European Students’ Right Charter. The crackdown on student activists in Belarus is clearly an expropriation of academic freedom that Belarus pledged to uphold when it had been admitted to the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and became a member of the Bologna Process in May 2015 in Yerevan, Armenia,

**Support** the Belarusian National Youth Council ‘RADA’ in its [Statement](#) on deterioration of the situation related to cooperation of the European organisations and institutions with Belarusian youth civil society organisations,

**Commit** to continue cooperation with ‘RADA’ and its member organisations in the field of youth policy and youth work development,

**Appeal** to the Council of Europe, to other European and international organisations and institutions for revision of their policies and principles of cooperation with the Republic of Belarus in the field of youth policy development, with emphasis on respect towards human rights, civil and political rights in particular, and democratic principles and values,

**Urge** the Council of Europe, other European and international organisations to ensure full and fair inclusion of representatives of Belarusian youth non-governmental organisations, movements and independent actors into a dialogue on shaping agendas and programmes on youth policy and youth-related issues,

**Urge** the Council of Europe, other European and international organisations and institutions to prioritise real democratic change, in particular in the youth field, responsible attitude towards international treaties, respect for civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of young people in Belarus while launching their relations and continuing negotiations with the Belarusian government.