

Press release – Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya calls on MEPs to stand by the people of Belarus



In her address to Members of the [Foreign Affairs Committee](#) and [Subcommittee on Human Rights](#) on Monday, Belarusian opposition leader Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya reiterated firmly that the ongoing Belarusian uprising is not a “geopolitical revolution (...) it is neither pro-Russian nor anti-Russian, not pro-EU nor anti-EU, (...) it is simply pro-Belarus and a democratic revolution”.

She underlined that a new Belarus has emerged since the summer, led by women, which will seek to become a “reliable partner”, based on the rule of law, and respected by the world.

Release political prisoners, end police violence and hold free and fair elections

“Our fight is a fight for freedom, for democracy and for human dignity. It is exclusively peaceful and non-violent. We demand only three basic things: the release of all political prisoners, an end to police violence and to conduct new, free and fair elections”, she said.

Ms Tsikhanouskaya, who spoke alongside other members of the Belarusian

democratic opposition Volha Kavalkova and Pavel Latushka, also urged MEPs and the EU to continue showing solidarity with the people of Belarus and to support the Belarusian civil society and media, which remain under constant pressure from the regime.

“Together we can create a new Belarus admired by the world. We stand and will stand united, because our future is at stake. We also ask you to stand united alongside the Belarusian people and we need your support”, she said.

Sanctions must be implemented

Most MEPs praised the courageous actions of the Belarusian political opposition and the country’s citizens in the face of a brutal and repressive regime. Some issued stark reminders to the EU to not become a passive player vis-à-vis the struggle in Belarus and move from statements to actions. This also includes the matter of sanctions, on which EU governments so far have not been able to agree.

The majority of speakers reiterated the main messages of the European Parliament’s latest resolution on Belarus, adopted on 17 September. In the text, MEPs called for new elections to be held, new sanctions against Aliaksandr Lukashenka and his regime, while pointing out that Ms Tsikhanouskaya, who was the main democratic contender in the elections, is considered by many Belarusians to be the real winner of the vote and the country’s real president-elect. Read more [here](#).

For a full overview of all the statements and remarks, you can watch the debate again [here](#) (21.09.2020).

European Parliament President David Sassoli also held a bilateral meeting with Ms Tsikhanouskaya on Monday, after which he issued [the following statement](#).

Quote

Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee, [David McAllister](#) (EPP, DE), made the following statement after the meeting:

“I was very pleased to welcome Ms Tsikhanouskaya in person to our committee meeting today for an interesting and inspiring debate. The position of the European Parliament is very clear: we reject the results of the so-called presidential elections that took place in Belarus on 9 August, as they were conducted in flagrant violation of all internationally recognised standards. We will also not recognise Mr Lukashenka as president of Belarus once his current term of office expires. We strongly support immediate EU sanctions against all individuals responsible for falsifying the election results and the ongoing repression and violence in the country, including Mr Lukashenka himself. What Belarus needs now is a peaceful and democratic transition of power as a result of an inclusive national dialogue between all relevant parties”.