

Ref: TG EUR 49/2020.002

Mj. -Gen. Yury Khadzhimuratavich Karayeu
Minister of Internal Affairs
Vulica Haradski Val 4
Minsk
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Belarus

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**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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Dear Major-General Karayeu,

We write to inform you that in August 2020 we launched a global petition calling on the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Belarus to:

- Immediately end the violent police crackdown against peaceful protesters and journalists;
- Ensure that the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and expression of all people in Belarus are fully respected; and
- Ensure that all law enforcement officials interacting with the public are individually identifiable through name or personal number tags and take all other necessary steps to ensure full accountability of members of law enforcement agencies and their commanding officers for all their actions.

We deeply regret that the police force under your command continues to act expressly in contravention of all three of these calls. We take this opportunity to reiterate in clear view our calls, and to point out that by continuing to ignore them your ministry and your government are unequivocally contravening Belarus's obligations under international law and standards as well as the country's Constitution.

We would also like to stress that these calls, and our dismay at the ongoing and widespread human rights violations in Belarus, have wide-reaching international resonance.

191,000 people from 184 countries and territories – from Canada to South Africa, from New Zealand to Argentina – have signed our global petition calling upon your ministry to end the violent police crackdown. That said, due to the deteriorating human rights and security situation in Belarus, and considering the brutal reprisals unleashed against government critics in your country, we will not hand over to you the petition with individual signatories including many Belarusian nationals living in Belarus and abroad. All Amnesty offices retain full lists of these names, however, and they can be independently verified.

Over the last three months we and our partners on the ground have collected countless first-hand testimonies, including medical documents, that serve as evidence of a campaign of widespread violations of the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, as well as torture and other ill-treatment of peaceful protesters and bystanders in Belarus. The detention centre Akrestina in Minsk has become synonymous with the practice of vicious beatings, sexual violence and other methods of torture and other ill-treatment. It is, of course, one of numerous detention centres in Belarus from which similar human rights violations have been reported.

According to widely available video footage and testimonies given to us by local human rights defenders and torture survivors themselves, police violence and gross human rights violations against peaceful protesters continue every day. Just in the last weeks we have seen shocking images of university students being dragged out of university buildings, peaceful protesters including older people being violently pushed into police cars, and bystanders and passers-by being violently arrested and beaten.

We reiterate that the world is watching events in Belarus with shock and dismay, and that Amnesty's global movement will campaign and raise awareness about human rights violations in your country for as long as they continue. We will also pursue justice for the victims of these violations and accountability for those responsible.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Marie Struthers". The ink is dark and the handwriting is fluid and personal.

Marie Struthers
Director
Eastern Europe and Central Asia Regional Office