



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

**STATEMENT
ON THE PERSECUTION OF POLITICAL PRISONERS BY THE BELARUSIAN REGIME**

15 December 2021
Vilnius

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

having regard to the extremely severe verdict of 14 December 2021 delivered by court of the Belarusian regime against political prisoners, including Siarhei Tsikhanouski, sentenced to 18 years in a maximum security prison; Mikalai Statkevich, sentenced to 14 years in prison; Ihar Losik, and Uladzimir Tsyhanovich, sentenced to 15 years in prison; and Artsiom Sakau and Dzmitry Papou, sentenced to 16 years in prison,

noting that the Lukashenko regime has been increasingly resorting to repression and that there are currently 929 political prisoners in Belarus,

strongly condemns the abovementioned court ruling of 14 December 2021 of the Belarusian regime;

calls for the release and rehabilitation of all political prisoners and other illegally detained persons;

demands access for international observers to the detention facilities of the Belarusian regime and **calls on** the entire international community to demand access for representatives of international human rights organisations to visit political prisoners and monitor their detention conditions and health status;

calls on the Member States of the European Union and the European institutions, as well as the Euro-Atlantic partners to take joint action in the United Nations, the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe and other international organisations, the G-7 and other formats to stop the unjustified and unlawful mass persecution of Belarusian political activists, human rights defenders, and independent journalists by the Belarusian regime and bring the perpetrators to justice;

calls for economic and political sanctions against the Lukashenko regime jointly imposed by all Euro-Atlantic partners until all political prisoners are released and free and democratic elections are held and for consideration of new sanctions should the regime escalate the repression.

Giedrius Surplys

Deputy Chair and Acting Chair of the Committee