

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

October 14, 2011

His Excellency Alexander Lukashenko  
President  
Republic of Belarus  
Presidential Palace  
Minsk  
Belarus

Dear President Lukashenko:

As friends of Belarus, we are writing to express our deep concern regarding the detention of Belarus citizens. In particular, we have received a number of inquiries about the detention of democracy advocates including: Nikolay Statkevich, Andrey Sannikau, Dmitri Bandarenka, Igor Olinevich, Nikolai Dedok, Alexander Frantskevich, Dmitri Dashkevich, Eduard Lobov, Pavel Severinets, Nikolay Avtukhovich, and Ales Belyatsky.

As you know, the U.S. Department of State and the European Union, as well as other trans-national organizations and Non-Governmental Human Rights organizations have repeatedly expressed concerns over the status of civil and political rights in Belarus. So long as these concerns remain, we fear that Belarus will remain isolated within the international community to the detriment of the economy and people of Belarus.

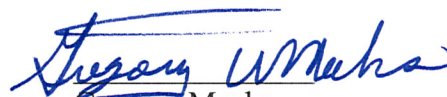
We know, as friends of Belarus, that all the people of Belarus cherish the inherent and inviolable dignity of the human person; which means freedom from arbitrary arrest or seizure. We also know that the people of Belarus are committed to the principles and ideals of democracy; including the right to free speech and dissent. Therefore, we respectfully ask you to address these concerns; particularly the cases cited above. If improprieties are true, we respectfully urge you to ensure the freedom of those individuals as quickly as possible and to hold those responsible for these deplorable acts fully accountable for their illegal actions.

We cannot stress enough, Mr. President, that if these reports of illegal detention are accurate, they suggest a serious problem is occurring within Belarus that requires decisive action on the part of your government to stop. Freeing unlawfully detained individuals and prosecuting those responsible for their illegal detention will send a strong signal to the people of Belarus and to the international community that your government will not tolerate human rights violations or the subversion of democracy.

Sincerely,



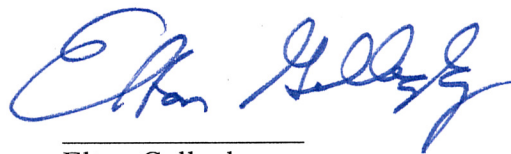
Dan Burton  
Chairman, Subcommittee on  
Europe and Eurasia



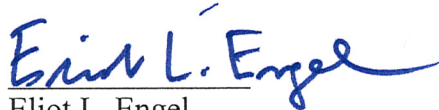
Gregory Meeks  
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on  
Europe and Eurasia



Tim Griffin  
Vice Chairman, Subcommittee on  
Europe and Eurasia



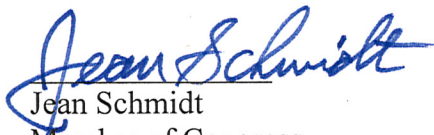
Elton Gallegly  
Vice Chairman, Committee on Foreign  
Affairs



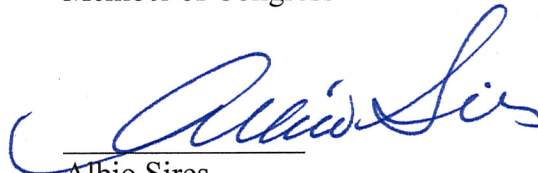
Eliot L. Engel  
Member of Congress



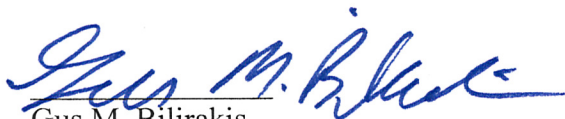
Ted Poe  
Member of Congress



Jean Schmidt  
Member of Congress



Albio Sires  
Member of Congress



Gus M. Bilirakis  
Member of Congress



Theodore E. Deutch  
Member of Congress



Tom Marino  
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