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Third UA: 147/20 Index: EUR 49/8480/2024 Belarus of September 6, 2024

## **BELARUS END THE TORTUROUS ISOLATION OF MARYIA KALESNIKAVA**

Maryia Kalesnikava has been unfairly imprisoned for four years because of her role in the 2020 Belarus election and peaceful protests. For over 500 days, she has been completely cut off from the outside world—no phone calls, visits, or letters. She is also not allowed to talk to other prisoners. Trusted sources say her health has gotten much worse, and she now weighs just 99 pounds. The authorities' refusal to give her proper medical care is cruel and puts her life in real danger.

### **Write to the Minister of Interior in Belarus urging him to:**

- Ensure that Maryia Kalesnikava is released immediately and unconditionally.
- End her incommunicado detention and allow her contact with the outside world.
- Stop all forms of torture and ill-treatment against her.
- Provide her with the adequate medical care she urgently needs.

### **Write to:**

Lt.-Gen. Ivan Kubrakou  
Minister of the Interior  
Vul. Haradski Val 4,  
Minsk 220030, Belarus  
Email: [uzgs@mvd.gov.by](mailto:uzgs@mvd.gov.by)  
*Salutation: Dear Minister,*

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Maryia Kalesnikava was arrested on September 7, 2020. Following an unfair trial, she was sentenced to 11 years in prison on fabricated charges, including “extremism” and “attempting to seize power.” Since February 2023, she has been completely cut off from the outside world. Authorities regularly place her in punishment cells, where she is confined in a small space, denied communication with other prisoners, and allowed only 30 minutes a day outside in the prison yard.

Kalesnikava suffers from an ulcer and other health conditions that have worsened due to the harsh prison environment. Confidential sources report that her health is in critical condition. She has lost significant weight, now weighing only 45 kilograms (99 pounds). Despite these serious health concerns, she has been denied necessary medical care.

Kalesnikava is a prisoner of conscience, detained solely for her role in the 2020 Belarus election and subsequent peaceful protests. Alongside Svyatlana Tsikhanouskaya and Veranika Tsapkala, she became a symbol of peaceful resistance. Following the exile of her colleagues, Kalesnikava emerged as the leading opposition figure, participating in peaceful protests and confronting abusive police officers. Her imprisonment and continued mistreatment are direct reprisals for her activism.

Kalesnikava has endured incommunicado detention since February 2023, with no contact with her family, lawyers, or the outside world. Her lawyers, who defended her, have been disbarred by the authorities in retaliation. Currently, Kalesnikava has no legal representation. In prison, she can only purchase food every ten days for a maximum of 40-80 Belarusian rubles (about \$18-36 CAD), with no access to refrigeration. This food is unsuitable for her medical condition, further worsening her health.

***Please take action as soon as possible until November 1, 2024! The UA will be duly updated should there be the need for further action.***