

29th Session of the Human Rights Council, item 4

Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on Belarus, Mr. Miklós Haraszi

23 June 2015

Statement by the Czech Republic

The Czech Republic aligns itself with the statement by the European Union.

Thank you, Mr. Haraszi, for your comprehensive report.

We regret to note that the human rights situation in Belarus has not improved since your last report but has further deteriorated. We are convinced that regardless of the political changes in Belarus' neighbourhood, the international community will remain focused on human rights in the country.

The Czech Republic welcomes the release of some political prisoners in 2014, but regrets to note that these persons were not fully rehabilitated and are not able to enjoy all civil and political rights, notably to fully participate in the elections. Mr. Haraszi, the Czech Republic joins your recommendation to Belarus to release and rehabilitate all remaining political prisoners. We are convinced that without this step the presidential elections in 2015 cannot be deemed as a free expression of the electors' will. We also fully concur with your recommendations concerning transparency and public participation in electoral processes.

The Czech Republic also joins your recommendation to create space for effective and full participation of citizens in public life. Subjects of civil society must be allowed to function legally and without undue state interference. Participation in public affairs and organizations must not be criminalized.

The Czech Republic believes that the situation in Belarus requires the Council's continued attention and fully supports the extension of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur in this key election year. We also reiterate our call on Belarus to grant full cooperation to the Special Rapporteur and other special procedures.

Mr. Special Rapporteur, we wish you all success in your valuable work.

Thank you.