

## Belarus Propaganda Update

Monthly review of Belarusian propaganda and Russian propaganda targeting  
Belarus

#5. February 2024

### *Main narratives of the Belarusian propaganda in February 2024:*

#### **Narrative 1. Belarus**

- Parliamentary and municipal elections on February 25: rallying around the “President” and mobilization in the face of threats.
- Informational and ideological rapprochement with Russia. Textbooks on the history of the “Union State” and the launch of new joint media projects.
- The topic of “genocide of the Belarusian people” in the anti-Western rhetoric.

#### **Narrative 2. Belarusian Democratic Forces**

- Rapprochement with Russia in the sphere of ideological confrontation with “external forces”: unification of the Russian and Belarusian lists of “extremists” and “extremist resources”, introduction of punishment in the form of deprivation of citizenship of Belarus and confiscation of property for “political” crimes.
- Fake calls to political emigrants with threats of deportation in Lithuania and their use by propaganda as a reason to discredit the Baltic States.

#### **Narrative 3. Ukraine**

- Changes in the top command structure of the Armed Forces of Ukraine: “lack of autonomy of decisions” and “dependence on Washington”;
- Decade of the Ukrainian Maidan victory: “loss of sovereignty” and “victory of the Nazi junta”;
- EU financial aid – “America's shifting of responsibility for the war to Europe”;
- Justifications of the regime for the illegal transfer of Ukrainian children. The role of the Belarusian Red Cross.

#### **Narrative 4. Russia**

- Death of Aleksey Navalny: Kremlin narratives about the “disadvantage” of killing an opposition figure to Putin;
- Putin’s Interview with Tucker Carlson – “the main foreign policy event” in two years of war.

#### **Narrative 5. The West**

- Criticism of Western sanctions.
- New Line: Poland and the Baltic States are called to join the “Russia-Belarus Union”.
- Poland - farmers' protests.

## Top Absurdities

- This new chapter features the most ridiculous and absurd propaganda statements of the month.

## *Narrative 1. BELARUS*

### Parliamentary and municipal elections on February 25: rallying around the “President” and mobilization in the face of threats

The so-called “Single voting day”, during which parliamentary and regional municipal elections took place, was held in Belarus on February 25, 2024. Deputies of the House of Representatives of the National Assembly (Parliament) of the eighth convocation and local Soviets of Deputies of the 29<sup>th</sup> convocation was elected.

In the months preceding the elections, the authorities were mobilized to solve two main tasks: uniting pro-governmental forces around Lukashenka and preventing the admission of alternative candidates. In particular, in early October, the process of large-scale party “purges” was completed, as a result of which only four out of 15 political parties, which were fully pro-government, remained registered.

All this time the propaganda was broadcasting the goals of these purges to the population. For example, already after the voting results in February, Aliaksandr Shpakouski, Minister Counselor of the Belarusian Embassy in Moscow and a frequent guest of propaganda programs, stated that before the “elections” the Belarusian authorities “**formatted the political field** and excluded from it the political subjects, which for many years had been directly financed from abroad”, because they “[had never fought for the voters’ trust](#)”.<sup>1</sup>

He was echoed by Aleh Haidukevich, leader of the pro-governmental party LDPB, in an interview with propagandist Ryhor Azaronak:

*“[No fifth column!](#) No scum in the elections! There will be no Zmagarya [a pejorative nickname for the members of democratic forces] in the legal field. Forget it! And nothing will be accomplished militarily. You’ll answer for the terrorist attacks to the fullest! Traitors of our Fatherland are trying to intimidate us, but it looks ridiculous”.*

Earlier we have already written that the propaganda efforts before the “elections” were aimed at “sacralization” of Lukashenka and creation of the image of a “[savior](#)” and “[unifier](#)” for him. Another strong narrative – “president-peacemaker” - is no less actively used. The favorite technique of TV channels is to show images of “peaceful” Belarus against the background of bombed Ukrainian cities, troubles, and tears of Ukrainians.

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<sup>1</sup> The cited quotations retain the original style, spelling, and punctuation.

Journalist of the state TV channel ATN Kseniya Lebedeva stated in her TV show titled “How Ukraine was sold? Zelensky – the main criminal in the Eurasian space”:

*“We have a good example at our side, how the authorities of the country, who dreamed of getting everything at once, let the state go around the world and people to death – Ukraine. People believed that it was possible to start living well thanks to free money from the West, its military aid and [rebellion against their own kind](#)”.*

Furthermore:

*“[It is easy to start a war by provocations](#), a wrong word to the opponent, but it is hard to end it. And our President understands it well. Today, everything is being done in Belarus to make our country develop, prosper, live in peace, and people here feel happy”.*

Aleh Dyadchenka, member of the House of Representatives of the National Assembly of Belarus:

*“In Ukraine, hundreds of thousands died in civil war, which was unleashed by the Western and domestic bourgeoisies. We, Belarusians, made everything possible and impossible to bring both conflict parties to peace. [But it was not possible...](#)”*

Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament Uladzimir Andreichenka urged young voters to “think about the future of Belarus” during the voting. He believes that Belarus is a peace-loving country, which is not going to go to war with anyone, and that this is Lukashenka’s merit:

*“We are doing everything to prevent the hybrid war unleashed by the collective West led by the United States from escalating into real hostilities. This is possible thanks to the policy [pursued by the President of Belarus](#)”.*

Belarus refused to invite international observers to the “elections”. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) said that this decision contradicted its commitments in this area. The propaganda could not overcome the temptation not to comment venomously on the OSCE statement. Belarusian CEC Chairman Ihar Karpenka hinted in an interview with state TV channel ONT that the OSCE should deal with its own problems before meddling in Belarus’:

*“Probably, the OSCE ODIHR should first of all look at its structure, at how this structure works, how double standards are applied, how there is interference in internal affairs during such election campaigns that [we conduct](#)”.*

Renowned propagandist Andrei Mukavozchyk called not to pay attention to the accusations of international organizations:

*“Can we trust the CEC [Central Election Commission of Belarus] if the whole world has not recognized our elections for 30 years? We can. And we need to. And here’s why. ...The “whole world” is a lie. The Anglo-Saxon West and its satellites do not recognize them. They are our enemies. Why should we care about what our enemies and their clientele think about our elections? [Our friends have recognized and will recognize everything](#)”.*

Mukavozchyk also called the OSCE “[useless, and in some areas simply harmful organization](#)”, as part of its employees are “representatives of special services”, to whom “outright spies” ran in Belarus, as well as “talkers from the series of “defenders of rights”. He was glad that the OSCE representatives were not allowed to attend the “elections” and stated that “*independent foreign observers*” highly appreciated their conduct and results.

The “independent” obviously meant a group of observers from the CIS Interparliamentary Assembly headed by Deputy Chairman of the Federation Council Konstantin Kosachev. The latter, commenting on the Belarusian “elections”, [stated](#) in Minsk that he did not see “*any dissatisfaction on the part of the participants of the process and those who were to vote, as everything was organized here*”.

But there were other foreign “observers”, such as Krzysztof Tołwiński, a right-wing Polish politician and member of the pro-Kremlin Front party. In an interview with the government agency BelTA, [he said](#):

*“The legality and correctness of the election does not raise any doubts in my mind. Belarus has excellent democratic standards.”*

...Or as the observer from France Simon Vesperini, a frequent visitor to Russia and Belarus. He, too, [praises the organization of the “single voting day” in Belarus](#):

*“I have already been able to visit several polling stations and I am pleasantly surprised that so many people are working here, which I personally like very much. There is a festive atmosphere, and in general it feels that the elections are a festive day for voters. The atmosphere is friendly and calm. (BelTA, February 25).<sup>2</sup>*

Lukashenka himself [called “elections” a holiday](#):

*“Nowhere in the world there are open, honest, principled elections like in Belarus! It is a festive day for us. It has always been so. We pursue a sincere, honest policy”.*

Here, in the same polling station, he also [announced](#) his readiness to run for presidential “elections” 2025:

*“I will go, I will go, I will go, tell them [the opposition] that I will go. And the more difficult the situation is, the more they will stir up our society, and you [journalists] among others, [...] the faster I will go to these elections.”*

Propagandists immediately rushed to explain why Lukashenka should remain “president” for the next term. Ihar Tur ([ONTTV channel](#)):

*“Lukashenka is not a politician, he is a LEADER who is not interested in the next election, but in the next generations.”*

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<sup>2</sup> Independent media Reform.by published an overview over 15 European pseudo-observers of Belarusian “elections”: <https://reform.by/reform-by-nashel-12-iz-23-nabljudatelej-kotorye-priehali-v-belarus-iz-evropy-kto-jeti-ljudi>.

On February 28, a similar narrative was [developed](#) by pro-governmental political scientist Piotr Piatrouski in his Telegram channel:

*“Having survived 2020, sovereignly and independently grinding the fifth column, our state is passing through a new stage of sovereign development, in which the collective Lukashenka is formed as the political basis and bearer of values of the sovereign development of the Belarusian state in the future.”*

Russian propaganda joined to the promotion of Belarusian “elections”. On February 25, the day of voting in the stream of propagandist Ryhor Azarenok, pro-Kremlin “philosopher” Alexander Dugin [said](#) that the “elections” in Russia and Belarus are just a tribute to formality, and both “leaders” deserved to rule for life:

*“Our leaders - Lukashenka and Putin - are defenders of the Fatherland. They have kept our countries in the most difficult conditions. Why elect them, put them next to others? They are not on the level to be placed with anyone. We are saying [with these elections]: yes, you are legitimate, yes, you are our leaders, you are our chiefs. Continue to rule us, we are with you. We will achieve successes, new victories with you.”*

### Pre-election threats

Another classic pre-election trend is the “search for an anchor” to unite in the face of internal and external enemies. For example, pro-government politician Aleh Haidukevich [suggests](#) the audience to “[sign up as KGB agents](#)”, explaining that this organization is “*head and shoulders stronger than the special services of Poland, Lithuania and other Western countries*”.

Aliaksandr Niaverouski, Deputy State Secretary of the Security Council of Belarus, in an interview with *BelTA* on February 8, claims that “[a hybrid war has been unleashed against Belarus](#)”:

*“Unprecedented economic, political, informational pressure is applied. The countries of the so-called collective West are trying to destabilize the situation in the country and bring to power in Belarus the political forces loyal and favorable to them. ...Seeing no support from the population, they are already unashamedly declaring that they are ready for a violent seizure of power, including by the hands of our fugitives.”*

The expected response to all international challenges is the nuclear weapon recently received from Russia.

*“The return of TNWs [tactical nuclear weapons] to Belarus is a forced measure to prevent the unleashing of an armed conflict. It is a measure to deter potential adversaries from inflicting certain harm on us by means of military force”* (Uladzimir Apolonik, Head of the Second Department of the information and analytical department of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Belarus, [interview with the state agency BelTA](#)).

In general, the phrase “we were forced” in the context of obtaining nuclear weapons is most often used to justify the deployment of TNWs on the territory of the country.

On February 28, the Belarusian Foreign Ministry [issued a lengthy statement](#) in which, among other things, it called the deployment of TNWs in the country “a forced defense action in response to the military build-up in NATO countries”.

At the same time, state media continue to rebroadcast threats of Russian propaganda in Belarus. In particular, TG-channel of the state television ATN published a publication of Deputy Chairman of the Security Council of the Russian Federation Dmitri Medvedev with another threat to use nuclear weapons in case of war with the West<sup>3</sup> and [supplemented it with his commentary](#): “Then don’t say that Russia didn’t warn. It’s much clearer than that”.

And the propagandist Ryhor Azarenok [stated](#) that the country should change to “war economics”:

*“More military [servicemen]! We will come to the point where most of the country’s universities will open military departments. And the military budget will be many times bigger. Life will make it happen.”*

In general, the original vector of Belarus’s development is clear – resistance to external attempts to join the country to “civilization”:

*“We are directly and frankly offered to retreat, to submit to someone else’s will, to join the so-called civilized world. But the language of blackmail, diktat and ultimatums is unacceptable for us. On our land we will decide for ourselves how to live and what values to share”* (Ihar Lutski, deputy head of Lukashenka’s administration, [BeITA](#), February 10, 2024).

## Informational and ideological rapprochement with Russia

### *New Textbooks*

In February, Russian Ambassador to Minsk Boris Gryzlov [said](#) that Belarus and Russia had agreed to create **unified history textbooks for schools and universities**. According to him, “*this topic is very important, because there are still differences in the understanding of very important events in the history of the Soviet Union and the history of the Russian Empire,*” but now the parties have agreed that they will “*consider these events from a single point of view.*”

On February 20, Rector of Mahiliou State University Dzianis Duk said on air of the state TV channel STV that a single textbook on the history of Belarus and Russia is already used in schools “*as additional literature, as literature for optional classes, for in-depth study*”. When asked whether such a textbook would replace the Belarusian textbooks, the rector [said](#) that “unequivocally” no, but since Belarusians and Russians live “in the union space,” it was decided to develop “common approach”.

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<sup>3</sup> “Ballistic and cruise missiles with special warheads will be used to protect the territorial integrity of our country. This is based on our doctrinal military documents and is well known to everyone. And this is the proverbial Apocalypse. The end of everything” (Medvedev D. Personal Telegram channel, February 7, 2024 [https://t.me/medvedev\\_telegram/443](https://t.me/medvedev_telegram/443)).

Vadzim Lakiza, Director of the Institute of History, [donated](#) a textbook for universities “History of the Union State” to the Central Scientific Library of the National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Belarus. He is a co-author of this manual, which was published at the expense of the Federal Agency for Nationalities of the Russian Federation in cooperation with Faculty of History of the Minsk State University, the Institute of History of the National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Belarus, Academy of Administration under the President of Belarus, and Faculty of History of the Belarusian State University.

On February 12, Belarusian-Russian MFA consultations on information issues were held in Moscow. According to the Telegram channel of the Belarusian Foreign Ministry, the delegations “[discussed a wide range of topics](#): from joint info-campaigns in social networks and the functioning of the Union media to the topics of artificial intelligence and promotion of the tourist potential of the two countries”.

#### *Topic of genocide at the propaganda department*

Yury Aliaksei, general director of the film company *Belarusfilm*, made a report at the board of the Ministry of Culture of Belarus, where he [talked](#) about the plans for 2024. The text of his speech was published in the February 23 issue of the state newspaper *Kultura*. He stated that, among other things, this year it was planned to release film projects about the **genocide of the Belarusian people** – “Burnt Villages” and “Death Camps” for high school and college students.

#### *New media project with Russia*

On February 26, it [became known](#) about the launch of a new joint video project of Belarusian and Russian propagandists “Minsk-Moscow”. The presenters are Liudmila Hladkaya, a journalist of the state newspaper *Belarus Segodnya*, and Konstantin Prydybaila, an employee of the propaganda channel *RT*. The announcement says that the programs of the project are planned to “*ask questions and find answers, rejoice at successes and discuss the problems of our Union State*”.

## **Narrative 2. BELARUSIAN DEMOCRATIC FORCES**

On February 6, Ambassador of Belarus to Russia Dzmitry Krutoi [announced](#) the possible merging of the lists of people deemed as extremists and the lists of “extremist” resources of both countries:

*“Citizens are perplexed when some of the resources recognized as extremist, say, in Russia, publish some messages in Belarus, or vice versa – those recognized as extremist in Belarus publish messages in Russia. And regarding these structures or people who, let’s say, have fled to Russia, no criminal proceedings are initiated in Russia or vice versa. Of course, there is a need for greater coordination of law enforcement agencies here. I think that this will be solved soon.*”

Aliaksandr Shpakouski [comments](#) the need to unify “lists of extremists” as follows:

*“We need synchronized approaches in the field of law enforcement and principled work to sanitize the information field”.*

Propagandist Ryhor Azarenok [goes](#) even further in his accusations:

*“Why the joint Belarusian-Russian lists of extremists is a good, important, necessary, and long overdue solution. Because we are fed up with “Lenta.ru”<sup>4</sup>, which asks “Coordination Council”<sup>5</sup> to comment something about our elections. ...Because the Polish and Lithuanian centers of our political bombshells are collecting donations for the Ukrainian armed forces. Because terrorists for sabotage and terrorist attacks both in Belarus and in Russia are recruited through the channels of “informational dumpsters”. Because Lukashenka’s enemy is Russia’s enemy. And vice versa. And we should have a common and complete list of enemies. And we will”.*

On February 7, the propagandist Yauhen Pustavoy in his [article](#) for the state newspaper *SB. Belarus Segodnya* expressed his support to the Mol officials, who proposed to return the article on “slackerism” to the Code of Administrative Offenses. As in Soviet times, this article should serve as an additional tool to fight dissidents:

*“...The eradication of dependency is becoming a tool for changing public consciousness. After the events of 2020, we are noticeably cleansing our political and public life from the rust of Western narratives and slow-motion threats <...> The internal affairs system has clearly analyzed the social portraits of extremists, street haters, and habitual perpetrators of domestic offenses. As it was required to prove - often all these characters are without a permanent job”.*

Aliaksandr Lukashenka, speaking at the general meeting of Belcoopsoyuz on February 16, quoted a fake citation from the negotiations of Belarusian political emigrants with unknown persons in the West: “Poland has the right to the western lands of Belarus. And in case of Russia’s defeat, Belarus will grow at the expense of the western lands of Russia”. The quotation was not verified and it is not clear from what sources the Belarusian dictator took it, but it did not prevent Lukashenko from speculating on this topic:

*“Read, we will get something from Smolensk, Bryansk, maybe Pskov regions. And we should give western Belarus (up to Minsk, as you know, the border was) to Poland.... Who among you can agree with this? Maybe some of you can, but I can’t. We will fight to the last for our lands. Moreover, we do not cause any problems to anyone. We don’t owe anyone anything”.*

In the same speech, Lukashenka reported the detention of individuals who “sneaked from the territory of Ukraine through swamps” and “transferred explosives to commit sabotage, primarily on the territory of Russia and Belarus”. Propaganda [claimed](#) that

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<sup>4</sup> Russian pro-Kremlin media outlet.

<sup>5</sup> Coordination Council – a representative body of the Belarusian Democratic Forces.



the terrorists were supported by “fugitive Belarusian opposition” who “hope that Russia will not win the conflict in Ukraine.”

Lukashenka [shared](#) similar “plans of provocations and plots” during a meeting with security forces on February 20. There he talked about the “main scenarios” of his overthrow, which are allegedly being developed by “fugitives and their foreign handlers,” and urged to be ready for war “mentally and strategically.” Without specifying the source of the information, he said that Polish and American intelligence is preparing a large-scale provocation against the Polish population, which they are going to accuse Russia and Belarus of.

At this meeting, the “president” [repeated his fake](#) that Poland wants to get “legal rights to a part of modern Belarus,” while the latter in turn should get a part of “defeated Russia.” According to Lukashenka, such plans were discussed by “fugitive Belarusian oppositionists” and representatives of the West.

On February 19, Andrei Shved, Prosecutor General of Belarus, [stated](#) that he was ready to make decisions on depriving opponents of the authorities of citizenship and confiscating their property. This topic is actively developed by semi-official TG-channels associated with the regime. The pro-government Telegram channel “[Zheltye slivi](#),” February 23:

*“The howling that fugitive extremists are having their property confiscated has been going on for a month now in opposition circles. The funniest thing is that there are still propagandists who promise “freedom fighters” that in case of a change of power they will allegedly get back compensation from the state and the person who bought the apartment. Except that the “freedom fighters” don't need all these apartments anymore. When they return to Belarus, they will have a place of residence guaranteed by the state – prison”.*

In the second half of February, political refugees in Lithuania started receiving phone calls **demanding deportation**, which made a lot of noise in the emigrant community. The Lithuanian Department of State Security stated that these calls were the work of telephone scammers. Nevertheless, the state propaganda started repeating the old myth that “the West will definitely abandon the fugitives”. Ryhor Azaronak [wrote](#) that Lithuania – “an “extinct, embittered, bitter, vindictive country” - would soon start “lustration of fugitives”, and for help (for some reason) it would necessarily apply to the special services of Belarus for help.

Dziyana Shybouskaya, author of the *Minskaya Pravda* newspaper, [compared](#) Lithuania to Nazi Germany:

*“Frankly speaking, what is happening now in the Baltics very much resembles the events before the Second World War in relation to the Jews in the Third Reich. The only thing left for the Baltics to do is to hold “Kristallnacht”, during which Russians and Belarusians will be victims. At the same time, such a thing in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia will probably be presented as “supreme justice”. And what about the West? It is not interested in human rights violations in the Baltics. And in this respect, absolutely nothing has changed for the West”.*

### Narrative 3. UKRAINE

#### Replacement (?) of the Chief Commander of the Ukrainian Armed Forces

The Belarusian propaganda, following the Russian propaganda, has been actively commenting on the internal affairs of Ukraine.

In early February, Aliaksandr Syrski replaced Valery Zaluzhny as commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. Almost all state media of Belarus repeated the same idea of their Kremlin colleagues that the decision to change the commander-in-chief was made not in Ukraine, but “in Washington”. For example, the author of *Minskaya Pravda*, Yuri Uvarov, [writes](#): “every decision of the Kyiv junta will be coordinated with the White House”. The ATN TV channel [reported](#) that “Zaluzhny, a U.S. protégé, was replaced by Syrski, a British protégé”.

Anton Popov [in his article](#) in *SB. Belarus Segodnya* on February 10 calls Syrski “General Butcher”, “a renegade who has no military talents”. He believes that Zelensky chose the new commander-in-chief, assessing him not as a military leader, but as a politically safe figure, who will not be able to compete with him: “In addition, Syrski will obediently drive more and more mobilized people to the slaughter on the orders from Bankova [a street in Kyiv where the Office of the Ukrainian President is located], and if necessary, he will take on himself the public indignation because of the high losses”.

#### Anniversary of the Ukrainian Maidan

The Belarusian mass media marked ten years since the victory of the “Revolution of Dignity” (February 23, 2014) with the traditional lamentation about the lost independence of Ukraine and about the “hand of the West”.

Siarhei Husachenka, propagandist of the TV channel *Belarus-1*, devoted the whole issue of his program *Ponyatnaya politika* [Understandable Politics] to Maidan. [According to him](#), Ukraine was then “thrown into the abyss of chaos,” a “coup d’état” was “won there,” after which “the state collapsed in a short time”. And, of course, it was separately emphasized that Belarus avoided such a fate thanks to Lukashenka.

Other “experts,” such as Aliaksandr Shpakouski, raise [dirty and old legend](#) that Maidan participants killed themselves:

*“There is a plenty of evidence that these shootings were initiated by Maidan supporters, behind which stood Ukrainian oligarchs and government circles of Western countries, primarily the United States, playing their dirty geopolitical game on the territory of Ukraine.”*

In her article in the newspaper *Belarus Segodnya*, propagandist Liudmila Hladkaya also [tries to convince](#) the reader that Lukashenka has preserved peace and security in Belarus:

*“Maidan is a direct path to war, suffering, destruction, loss of national identity. This is what our President has been constantly talking about for so many years”.*

## Financial Aid from the West

The reaction of state media to the EU's allocation of a new 50 bn euro aid package for Ukraine in early February and the delay in approving similar aid from the USA was predictable. Propagandists interpreted it as if the USA was shifting the responsibility for the continuation of the war in Ukraine onto the shoulders of Europe. Nadezhda Sass in her talk show on the state channel STV, for example, [stated](#):

*"An extraordinary event is taking place before our eyes: Europe is taking full responsibility for the heavy burden of continuing the armed struggle with Russia. How can this be, given that the EU has suffered the most from the severing of ties with Moscow...? It's simple: in preparation for Trump's increasingly likely victory and the rise to power of "isolationist nationalists" in the United States, Europe remains the main locomotive of the globalist project."*

Vadzim Hihin, pro-state expert, Head of the society "Znanye":

*"This was decided in Washington. They decided there will be a Europeanization of the conflict in Ukraine. The responsibility will be shifted on Europe. They say: "You Europeans will pay for this war..." The EU is non-subjective, there is no sovereignty inside, even for independent politicians like Orban". ([Newspaper SB. Belarus Segodnya](#), February 2).*

The propaganda is doing everything to discredit or belittle Western assistance to Ukraine in the eyes of the audience. Pro-government journalists have been voicing a "fresh" idea that Ukraine is deliberately deceiving European officials and is shelling itself for this purpose.

On February 7, EU's Chief Diplomat Josep Borrel, being in Kiyv during an official visit, was forced to go down to the bomb shelter for a while because of another Russian missile attack. The official TG-channel of Belarus TV *BT-ATN* could not resist caustic hint that the aerial alarm for Borrel was arranged by Ukraine itself to impress him and force the EU to give more money:

*" "Kvartal 95" is predictable beyond belief. A performance in honor of the arrival of any purse with money."<sup>6</sup>*

On February 25, *BT-ATN* published a photo of German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock sitting in a bomb shelter with a similar [comment](#):

*"All-inclusive tour in Ukrainian: Baerbock, who came to Odesa, was organized a trip to a bomb shelter with a photo shoot – they turned on the air raid siren and told her to hide".*

## Ukrainian children

On February 14, the Head of the Belarusian Red Cross (BRC) Dzmitry Shautsou said that the organization would continue to help children taken from the occupied

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<sup>6</sup> Kvartal 95 – entertainment and production company where Volodymyr Zelensky started his career as an actor.

territories of Donbass to Belarus this year, and for the first time [voiced the figures](#): “Today 7,200 citizens of this country are under the care of the BRC, including 1,995 children”.

Earlier, in December 2023, the International Red Cross [suspended](#) the membership of Belarus and stopped funding the BRC. At the same time, the BRC leadership did not obey its demands to dismiss Dzmitry Shautsou, who supported the Russian occupation of Ukraine, traveled with “humanitarian convoys” to the occupied Ukrainian territories and wore a patch with the symbol of occupation “Z” on his clothes. Shautsou did not hide his active participation in organizing the illegal transfer of Ukrainian children to Belarus.

In addition, he publicly [stated](#) the possibility of using nuclear weapons “to protect Russia and Belarus”.

#### **Narrative 4. RUSSIA**

##### **Aleksey Navalny’s death**

For the pro-state media, the death in prison of the most famous Russian opposition politician and anti-corruption fighter, Aleksey Navalny, did not go unnoticed. At the same time, the Belarusian propaganda tries not to show initiative in Russian domestic issues and, as a rule, limits itself to disseminating the Kremlin version of events, occasionally with a link to the Belarusian agenda. As in other cases of deaths of opposition figures, independent journalists and activists, propagandists immediately start repeating in chorus that “Putin did not benefit from this death”. [Vadzim Hihin](#):

*“If Westerners needed such a death, it’s as if it had to be invented. Who definitely doesn’t need it is Vladimir Putin. And who benefits are those who are betting on further escalation”.*

Official Telegram channel of the Belarusian state TV ATN in its typical manner [called](#) not to pay attention to the Western reactions to the death of the politician:

*“The times are currently such that Russia (and Belarus) want to spit on the opinion and questions of “stoltenbergs”, “borrels” and similar vagabonds. And rightly so”.*

“Political expert” Andrei Lazutkin [put a version forward](#) that the West will use Navalny’s death as proof that peace talks cannot be held with Putin:

*“We remember it clearly how the peace talks in Istanbul were disrupted with Bucha, where Russia allegedly carried out “genocide”. Now, seems like the upcoming peace talks are being disrupted wit Navalny’s death”.*

Another standard Kremlin comment: Navalny is a “sacred victim”. He was allegedly somehow killed by the West to “sway the situation before the elections” ([Ryhor Azarenok](#)).

It is noteworthy that Azarenok [uses](#) this conspiracy theory to justify the practice of silent isolation of political prisoners (incommunicado):

*"It is now clear why should any lawyers never be allowed to the so-called political prisoners, nor should they be allowed to receive any letters or parcels? Western security services have super-sophisticated skills in the ways of liquidating people".*

In the last week of February, Belarusian media switched to covering the activities of the widow of politician Yulia Navalnaya, drawing parallels with the leader of the Belarusian democratic forces Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya. [Aliaksandr Shpakouski](#):

*"The appearance of Yulia Navalnaya in the European Parliament is another result of the work of the Western political doll factory. Primitive technology of "female leadership", invented by American specialists for the "Russian world" and previously tested on a 'housewife' from Mikashevichi named Tikhanouskaya. Given the fact that the world has been watching the tragic comedy with the participation of the Belarusian "leader" for almost four years, it will not be difficult to predict the actions of the widow of the deceased Russian blogger".*

### Putin's Interview with Tucker Carlson

As in the previous case, Belarusian propagandists rarely expressed their opinions on the Russian agenda and worked within the strict framework set by the Kremlin media. They admired Carlson as "the only honest journalist in the West" and trumpeted praise for Putin. His interview in the materials of the state media appeared to be almost the main revelation of the year, because of which many people around the world "will have their eyes opened".

Head of Belteleradiocompany [Ivan Eismant](#):

*"Most Americans have no idea what is really going on between Russia and Ukraine. They have the point of view that is imposed on them by the White House, the Pentagon and the media controlled by them".*

Anton Papou, author at the newspaper [SB. Belarus Segodnya](#) (February 8):

*"...An interview with Vladimir Putin is 100 percent likely to be a bomb, the explosion of which will shake the stale information swamp of the West to its foundations <...> In reality, ordinary Americans and Europeans have no idea what is really going on in Russia, Ukraine, and even in Belarus. For years they have been forced to live under the conditions of one-sided coverage of all foreign policy issues..."*

Aliaksei Sinenka, ([Minskaya Prauda](#), February 8):

*"Tucker Carlson revives the traditions of honest journalism on the American continent. ...A sprout of real truth from the civilized Slavic world is finally breaking through the concrete of lies that has flooded the wild American media space."*

The essence of such a hype around the interview was unexpectedly critically [explained](#) by one of the most aggressive Belarusian propagandists Piotr Piatrouski (February 7):

*“Adoration of Carlson as a clear fact of mental dependence on the West. For several days now, the news feed has been swarming with news about the Moscow adventures of journalist Carlson. ...It’s getting absurd. They tell what Carlson eats, where he sleeps and what play he watches. What’s all this for? Yes, he’ll interview Putin. But what of it? ... Mental dependence on the West, adoration and even servility to it remains. And at the end of the question, and when the last press conference of the Russian President was organized for journalists from allied Belarus or at least EAEU countries, was there such close attention to them and their preferences in Moscow?”*

## Narrative 5. THE WEST

### Sanctions

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Belarus (MFA) continues to criticize the West for imposing sanctions. On February 13, on its official Telegram-channel an [announcement](#) appeared, which claimed that Western companies stopped deliveries of medicine and pharma products that “ease the pain and suffering of children”. This fact was called by the MFA as “medical fascism” and stated that European officials resemble in this manner to doctor-fascist Josef Mengele.

This storyline was further developed in articles by the authors of the pro-state *SB. Belarus Segodnya*. [Lyudmila Hladkaya](#):

*“The executioner is long gone, but his dirty work continues in America, dragging European Allies into the crime. As we can see, they are more afraid of secondary sanctions than of complicity in the abuse of sick people”.*

...and [Anton Papou](#):

*“Stopping the supply of medical materials and drugs looks like an attempt at genocide... However, it is hard to expect otherwise from those who once elevated racial theory to an absolute, bringing anti-human ideology to the level of practical application in ghettos and concentration camps.”*

### Poland and the Baltic States

A new curious plot started to appear in the propaganda materials – however, it is as absurd as all the ideas of the state propagandists. For some reason, it is especially frequent in the case of Aleh Haidukevich, the leader of the pro-governmental Liberal Democratic Party of Belarus and a frequent guest of propaganda channels. The essence of his statements boils down to the fact that the place of Poland and the Baltic States is allegedly only in an alliance with Russia and Belarus:

*“Since the collapse of the USSR, every year Lithuania has been losing its sovereignty and today there is nothing left of it! Lithuania has a future only in union with [Belarus and Russia!](#)”.*

*“Union with Russia strengthens our sovereignty and statehood. And the European Union takes away sovereignty and statehood. This is the difference between these unions. Everyone who joins the European Union loses*

sovereignty. It's over, goodbye. But in our country, it is strengthened. **Therefore, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, we call you. Please!** But when you wake up and come to your senses, **welcome to the Union State.** We'll keep you safe. Beautiful S-400 missiles will stand on the border and protect you from NATO. Because you are threatened not by Russia and Belarus, but by the North Atlantic Alliance" ([SB. Belarus Segodnya](#), February 8).

Haidukevich accuses Poles in "carrying out orders from the White House" and creating an "anti-Russian springboard" with the help of American money and weapons and this does not coincide with the interests of "ordinary Poles". According to him, Poles would be much happier if they would use their potential for "normal human relations" with Russia and Belarus ([Sputnik.by](#), February 13).

### Other examples of anti-Western rhetoric

Ryhor Azarenok ([TV channel STV](#)):

*"The West both then and now is an absolutely mystical, satanic power and structure".*

[Aleh Dyadchenka](#), member of the House of Representatives of the National Assembly of Belarus:

*"As long as Washington, London and Brussels Satanists and Freemasons will interfere in the affairs of the Slavic peoples in the most brazen way, the streams of human blood will continue to flood Mother Earth".*

On February 27 propagandist of BT Kseniya Lebiadzeva praised Belarusians for not becoming "puppets of the USA", and [compared](#) American leadership with Nazi leadership:

*"Today the task of the West is to absorb and enslave the Slavs, to make them serve the Western bigwigs. This was Hitler's opinion, and this is the opinion of the [US] State Department's representatives now".*

Vadzim Yalfimou, contributor to *Minskaya Pravda*, [threatens](#) Great Britain in response to its proposal to consider sending a NATO "expeditionary corps" to Ukraine:

*"...English Prime Minister David Cameron has not taken one thing into account – the fiery heat may be too much for England. ... The Foreign Secretary of England is not just a butler for cowboys <...> He is a target...".*

The large-scale protests of farmers in Poland could not go unnoticed by the propaganda. Alena Krasouskaya, pro-government "human rights activist" ([SB. Belarus Segodnya](#), February 1):

*"Calls to support Ukraine at the cost of their own well-being only irritate Euro peasants and push them to active protests."*

## Israel

In February, the pro-government newspaper *Minskaya Pravda* published another anti-Semitic article. After the Hamas attack on Israel on October 7, 2023, the newspaper had already published a radically anti-Israeli piece, in which the author, Igor Molotov, an employee of the Russian propaganda channel *RT*, praised Hamas terrorists, called their terrorist attack “an uprising of the brave” and called to detonate a thermonuclear bomb over Israel. The article was quickly deleted, but it was [quoted](#) by many media outlets in Belarus and around the world.

This time, the [newspaper published an article](#) after the world commemorated the International Holocaust Remembrance Day (January 27), full of myths typical for anti-Semitic conspiracy. The article by Marina Rumyantseva was titled “Holocaust remembrance in the ‘civilized world’”: we collected topics that are alarming”. Here are a few quotes:

*“At the end of January, the entire ‘civilized world’ honors the memory of the victims of the Holocaust in World War II. All would be well, but there are several points that are becoming more and more alarming. First, for some reason, even in Germany, the victims of the Nazis are considered to be exclusively Jews, forgetting about the number of Slavs who were exterminated. <...>*

*Secondly, commemorating the Holocaust Remembrance Day on the day of liberation of the Auschwitz concentration camp on January 27, 1945, it is less and less often emphasized that the world owes this significant event in that terrible war to the Red Army. <...>*

*Third, in the spirit of the current inversion of all meanings, the world media use this commemorative day to call the return of Nazism the activity of their own right-wing streams demanding a halt to the flow of illegal migration, or Russia’s actions to prevent the Banderovshchina on its southwestern borders. (February 10).*

## TOP ABSURDITIES

We were thinking for a long time about what we should do with the most absurd, funny, and stupid propaganda statements that do not fit into any storyline. We decided not to throw them away, but to put them in a separate compilation.

Lyudmila Hladkaya (*SB. Belarus Segodnya*), [personal Telegram-channel](#):

*“The Verkhovna Rada is preparing to adopt the legislation on compulsory impregnation of Ukrainian women who have not concluded a contract with the Armed Forces of Ukraine”.*

Dziyana Shzvkouskaya (*Minskaya Pravda*), [personal TG-channel](#):

*“It turns out that Olena Zelenska [wife of the Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenski] and Hitler’s wife – Eva Braun were born on the same day – February 6. Both couples were on the cover of the magazine *British Vogue*. What do you think of such a coincidence?”.*

[Also her:](#)



*“Social media is full of discussions about the curse of Zelensky – those who shake his hand are found to have cancer. The King of Britain who shook hands with him was diagnosed with cancer. And earlier the head of the Pentagon, who met with Zelensky, also fell ill with prostate cancer, and was urgently operated on. And he turned the country he was put in charge of into a cemetery.”*

iSANS continues to monitor the main storylines of the Belarusian propaganda in 2024