

Transnational repression in Belarus: A multifaceted instrument to silence the dissent

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Working paper by iSANS – the International Strategic Action Network for Security

June 2024

This document is a working paper aimed at drawing attention to the growing problem of the use of transnational repression by the Lukashenka regime to suppress the voices of activists and ordinary people who were forced to leave the country as a result of persecution. iSANS plans to publish a report on the issue later in 2024.

Executive summary

Transnational repression, which occurs when states reach across borders to silence dissent by those living in exile has lately become a tool of choice for authoritarian regimes to suppress voices and activities of their critics outside their territorial jurisdiction. Belarus is currently considered to be among the top ten states practicing transnational repression. However, none of the other countries has recently taken up the strategy with as much intensity as the regime in Belarus. Increasingly intolerant of peaceful opposition, Lukashenka's government augmented its already extensive arsenal of repressive tactics with the aim of silencing critical voices of Belarusians abroad. Minsk was responsible for 31 percent of the transnational repression incidents recorded in the world in 2021, the first year human rights researchers documented the use of transnational repression tools by the regime. It has used transnational repression to silence the dissent outside its territory long before the current crackdown. However, after the start of mass repression in the summer of 2020 and forced emigration of several hundred thousand Belarusians, including members of the opposition, participants in peaceful protests, civic activists, journalists, lawyers and other pro-democratic figures, the regime engaged in massive transborder repression.

In pursue to silence the dissent, the Lukashenka regime applies various tools of transnational repression, listed in the 2023 resolution of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, including:

- 1) **Direct attacks**, including **forced landing of a civilian aircraft, attempted abductions, and planned assassination attempts**;
- 2) **Co-opting other countries to act against a target by requesting detention, deportation and other types of forced rendition on the basis of fabricated legal charges**, including **misuse of Interpol system and extradition requests to other countries** in the framework of bilateral cooperation agreements. Belarus closely cooperates with Russia on the issue of extradition, and more than 80% of extradition requests are satisfied. Another tool in this category is the **inclusion of the targeted exiled individuals in the lists of “extremists” or “terrorists”**, thus threatening them with prosecution abroad, closing their bank accounts and preventing them from traveling home. In December 2022, the Belarusian parliament passed legislative amendments to 2002 law “On citizenship” that would allow **stripping Belarusians abroad of their citizenship for extremist activities** and causing serious harm to the interests of Belarus;
- 3) **Impediments to mobility such as passport cancellation and denial of consular services**. Decree No. 278, signed by Lukashenka on September 4, 2023, ordered diplomatic missions of Belarus abroad to **stop issuing new passports to Belarusians abroad and renew the old ones**. It affected the estimated 200,000 to 500,000 Belarusians who live in exile. Not only does the decree put them at great risk if they return to Belarus to renew their documents, it also infringes on their ability to live, travel, work, and access essential services such as medical care if they remain abroad. By the same decree, they are also **deprived of the opportunity to issue power of attorney** and, accordingly, dispose of their property back home;
- 4) **Threats from a distance**, including public and non-public **threats; actions targeting a person’s family** or business partner; **hacking of e-mail and social media accounts; opening criminal investigation and holding trials *in absentia***; and **property expropriation**. In recent months, the Investigative Committee has opened dozens of cases *in absentia* against opposition members, civic activists and non-public persons.

The review of the massive use of various tools of transnational repression by the Lukashenka regime extraterritorially and from inside the country demonstrates the regime’s determination to silence its critics both within and outside Belarus’ jurisdiction, as well as its confidence in impunity for its actions. Acts of transnational repression by Belarus constitute serious breaches of international human rights law. They instill fear among Belarusians inside and outside of the country. Moreover, abuse of international legal cooperation agreements, forced landing of a civilian aircraft,

potential infiltration of the regime's agents into the territory of other states and their actions against exiled Belarusian dissenters represent a serious security threat.

It is high time for the international community to take active steps to address the problem of transnational repression in Belarus. We suggest a few recommendations to intergovernmental organizations and states towards this goal, including legislation, policy, institutional, training and protection measures.

Transnational repression as an instrument of political repression worldwide and in Belarus

Transnational repression,¹ which occurs when states reach across borders to silence dissent by those living in exile has lately become a tool of choice for authoritarian regimes to suppress voices and activities of their critics outside their territorial jurisdiction, targeting their own nationals or former nationals, including opposition members, civil society activists, human rights defenders, independent journalists, and participants of peaceful protests. Various tools of transnational repression, ranging from assassinations abroad to surveillance and online threats to persecution of relatives in the home country, are aimed at silencing and punishing exiled opponents and intimidating dissenters remaining inside the country. Transnational repression undermines the ability of activists in exile to continue their human rights and democracy work and advocate for accountability from abroad. As thousands of pro-democracy figures have had to flee their countries of origin in the last few years due to domestic repression, we are witnessing the growth of the use of transnational repression by authorities of a number of states in the OSCE region, including Belarus, Russia, Azerbaijan, Türkiye, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan.²

The persecution of dissidents and political opponents of the ruling regime abroad has long-standing historical roots and has been actively used by the authorities of different countries for centuries. However, recently, the scale of transnational repression has been growing rapidly. There are several reasons for this. On the one hand, due to the growth of globalization, the development of the internet, international cooperation, the fall of the Iron Curtain, new opportunities for migration and the development of the asylum system, many civic activists, political oppositionists and journalists persecuted at home can continue their public, political and professional activities, including using the internet, abroad, and are a threat and a serious irritant for the authorities of their country. On the other hand, interstate cooperation is actively developing in the field of criminal justice, combating international organized crime and terrorism, tax evasion, etc. In recent decades, many former communist and developing countries have joined this cooperation, and those of them ruled by authoritarian regimes, actively abuse

international and bilateral law enforcement agreements to prosecute critics of the regime. At the same time, borders have become more open not only for opponents of the regime and journalists, but also for agents of the authorities who monitor activities of dissidents, threaten them or carry out attacks on them. Finally, the global backlash on democracy and the emergence of an increasing number of authoritarian and openly dictatorial regimes in the world lead to an increasing use of transnational repression in the world. These regimes successfully cooperate with each other not only in the military and economic spheres and international politics, but also in the persecution of oppositionists and civic activists.³

A recent resolution of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe provides a useful and compact classification, grouping methods of transnational repression into four main categories:⁴

- 1) direct attacks by which an origin state carries out a targeted physical attack against an individual abroad, such as assassinations, assaults, enforced disappearances, physical intimidation or violent forced rendition, sometimes with support of law enforcement bodies of the state of new residence (or using hired proxies);
- 2) co-opting other countries to act against a target using detention, unlawful deportation and other types of forced rendition, which are authorized through pro forma but meaningless legal procedures. This method includes misuse of Interpol Red Notices and diffusions, extradition proceedings and other forms of interstate legal assistance such as anti-money laundering and anti-terror financing measures;
- 3) impediments to mobility such as passport cancellation and denial of consular services, preventing the target from travelling or causing them to be detained;
- 4) threats from a distance, including online intimidation or surveillance, and coercion by proxy, in which a person's family, loved one or business partner (often located in the country of origin) is threatened, imprisoned or otherwise targeted.

Belarus is currently considered to be among the top ten states practicing transnational repression.⁵ It is noted, however, that none of the other countries has recently taken up the strategy with as much intensity as the regime in Belarus. Increasingly intolerant of peaceful opposition, Lukashenka's government augmented its already extensive arsenal of repressive tactics with the aim of silencing critical voices of Belarusians abroad. Minsk was responsible for 31 percent of the transnational repression incidents recorded in the world in 2021,⁶ the first year human rights researchers documented the use of transnational repression tools by the regime. The ongoing and the largest ever

wave of mass repression involves abductions, expulsions, extraditions and deportations, public threats, abuse of consular services, targeting relatives, and digital repression.

The Lukashenka regime has used transnational repression to silence the dissent outside its territory for decades, long before the current crackdown, both by preparing physical assaults (cases of former law enforcement officers Aleh Alkaeu, Uladzimir Baradach, Vyacheslau Dudkin, and journalist Pavel Sheremet⁷) and by using legal instruments (the case of former presidential candidate Ales Michalevich⁸). However, after the start of mass repression in the summer of 2020 and forced emigration of several hundred thousand Belarusians, including members of the opposition, participants in peaceful protests, civic activists, journalists, lawyers and other pro-democratic figures, massive transborder repression has unfolded. Close relations of the regime in Minsk with the Russian authorities and the continuous support the Kremlin provides to Lukashenka in maintaining his dictatorial control over the country have manifested, among other things, in close cooperation between the two regimes in implementing transnational repression against Belarusians who have fled to Russia.⁹

The greatly increased use of transnational repression tools by the Lukashenka regime is presently underestimated by the international community and is not addressed as a key problem in country review reports on the human rights situation on their own territories and in Belarus.¹⁰ It is, however, noted in specialized reports on transnational repression.¹¹ The increasing momentum in the regime's actions aimed at violating fundamental human rights and freedoms within the territories of other states testifies to its confidence in impunity and requires close attention and active response from the international community, including intergovernmental organizations, governments, and civil society of democratic states, especially those with considerable Belarusian diasporas. The absence of an urgent and strong response to both counter such actions and protect the targets will not only stimulate further escalation of transnational repression by the Lukashenka regime but can also lead to the situation when more non-democratic regimes will follow the path taken by Belarusian authorities.

The measures that we suggest should be taken to combat transnational repression by Belarus should take into consideration the whole range of tools employed by the Lukashenka regime. The facts of transnational repressions referred to in this paper are presented based on the classification given in the resolution of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe referred above.

Overview of instances of transnational repression by the Lukashenka regime

1. Direct attacks (such as assassinations, assaults, enforced disappearances, physical intimidation or violent forced rendition, sometimes with support of law enforcement bodies of the state of new residence)

- **murder and assassination attempts**

There is documentary evidence of the preparation in April 2012 by Lukashenka and the leadership of the Belarusian KGB of physical elimination of former law enforcement officers Aleh Alkaev, Uladzimir Baradach and Vyacheslau Dudkin, who fled to Germany, as well as the prominent investigative journalist Pavel Sheremet, who lived in Moscow.¹²

- **abductions and enforced disappearances, including forced transfer through the border to the country of origin (violent forced rendition);**

In 2021, Belarus grossly violated the norms of international civil aviation law, endangering the lives of dozens of passengers and crew of a foreign civilian aircraft by forcibly landing it in Minsk under the pretext of a fabricated terrorist threat. This was done in order to arrest an oppositionist Raman Pratasevich, who had left the country in 2019 and used a channel on the social media platform Telegram to document the regime's brutality against protesters.¹³ Following his arrest, Pratasevich confessed, denounced the opposition, and issued apologies in televised appearances apparently made under duress.¹⁴

Another striking example happened in Tokyo when Belarusian authorities attempted to force athlete Krystsina Tsimanouskaya to return home after she publicly criticized her team's coaches for mismanaging a track event. Tsimanouskaya was taken to the airport against her will by coaching staff, but she managed to contact Japanese police and avoid boarding the flight.¹⁵

2. Co-opting other countries to act against a target using detention, unlawful deportation and other types of forced rendition, which are authorised through pro forma but meaningless legal procedures (including misuse of Interpol Red Notices and diffusions, extradition proceedings and other forms of interstate legal assistance)

Belarus employs both approaches, abusing the Interpol system¹⁶ and sending extradition request to relevant agencies of other countries based on fabricated criminal charges to persecute the dissent abroad.¹⁷

- **abuse of the Interpol system**

The Belarusian authorities are actively abusing the Interpol system to identify the location of oppositionists and protesters who have gone abroad, sending out “red notices” and “diffusions” with requests for their extradition on the basis of fabricated data on alleged crimes committed by them. The National Central Bureau of Interpol of Belarus, which is directly subordinate to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, is used for this purpose. The Belarusian authorities have resorted to this tool to persecute oppositionists before 2020,¹⁸ but they began to use these instruments on a mass scale after the August 2020 events.

In particular, on the basis of requests with falsified data on criminal cases, protest participants Makariy Malakhouski in Poland and Valiantsin Vlasik in Hungary were detained.¹⁹ After the decision of the Polish authorities to refuse extradition, Malakhousky was released a day after his detention. Valiantsin Vlasik, who received humanitarian visa in Poland, was detained by border control at the Hungarian border on the basis of a request from Belarus through Interpol with false data on alimony debts and placed in a pre-trial detention center.²⁰ He had spent six months in detention before he was finally released and was able to return to Poland.²¹ Belarusian journalist and opposition activist Andrei Gnet is currently under house arrest in Belgrade. The Serbian authorities detained him upon arrival in the country on October 30, 2023, on the basis of an Interpol arrest warrant issued by the Belarusian Interpol Bureau. The Belarusian authorities accused Gnet of tax evasion. Gnet has remained in custody in Serbia for more than seven months. His health has deteriorated significantly. In case of extradition to Belarus, the journalist may face additional charges of creating an extremist group or participating in it, punishable with up to ten years in prison. The charge of tax evasion is punishable by imprisonment for up to seven years. In December 2023, the Belgrade Supreme Court ruled that the conditions for the extradition of Andrei Gnet to Belarus had been met. On March 12, 2024, the Belgrade Court of Appeal reversed this decision and sent the case for review. The trial resumed on March 26. The final decision can be delivered any time.²²

Minsk’s requests for the detention and extradition on charges of “terrorism” of the leader of the democratic forces Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, former investigator Igor Loban, heads of the NEXTA Telegram channel and other oppositionists were rejected by the authorities of neighbouring countries and removed by Interpol from the list of legitimate requests.²³ Despite Interpol’s warnings about the impermissibility of using the system of requests for prosecution for political reasons, the Belarusian authorities continue this practice. Lukashenka even sent the Ambassador of Belarus to France to the headquarters of Interpol to “solve problems”, but they refused to talk to him.²⁴

- **sending extradition request to relevant agencies of other countries**

Belarus cooperates most closely with Russia on the issue of extradition, and more than 80% of extradition requests are satisfied.²⁵ Belarusians who had fled to Russia after participating in protests were quickly deported to Belarus despite substantiated concerns that they could experience torture in custody.²⁶ According to media reports and human rights activists, in 2021, the Russian authorities detained and extradited to Minsk about 20 participants of the Belarusian protests for an unfair trial and probable torture,²⁷ despite the ban on extradition in many cases as part of interim measures applied by the European Court of Human Rights.²⁸ When the materials of the Belarusian authorities on criminal charges were completely unconvincing, the Russian judicial authorities agreed to subject the oppositionists to “forced expulsion” to Belarus due to violations of the registration regime.²⁹

Russia is not the only country that extradites and provides information about persons located on its territory to Belarus at its request. It has recently become known about the transfer of personal data of Belarusians who have additional protection in Poland to the Embassy of the Republic of Belarus.³⁰ The information was apparently transferred by various Polish state bodies. This incident raises serious concerns, as it violates the principles of confidentiality and security of citizens under international protection. Although the violations are not widespread and are already being studied by Polish authorities in order to find a solution to the problem, this situation is an excellent illustration of how even ordinary administrative procedures in democratic countries can pose a threat to citizens from totalitarian states such as Belarus.³¹

Belarus’ cooperation with other countries in the field of transnational persecution of dissent is increasing. In April 2024, a delegation of the Criminal Investigation Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Belarus went on a visit to Kazakhstan. The parties discussed the issues of exchanging information about wanted persons, the procedure for processing requests and the mechanism for their implementation.³²

- **including the targeted exiled individuals in the government-drawn lists of “foreign agents”, “extremists” or “terrorists”, thus threatening them with prosecution abroad, closing their bank accounts, and preventing them from traveling to the country of origin**

As of January 1, 2024, 1,156 persons were included in the “list of organizations and individuals involved in terrorist activities”, including 397 citizens of Belarus. 160 persons associated with Belarus were included in the list in 2023. Along with people whose actions may pose a real threat to state security, the Belarusian authorities include

representatives of the Belarusian opposition and civil society in the list. Persons included in it are prohibited from any financial transactions, their bank accounts are frozen.³³ As of May 10, 2024, there were 4,056 people in the Belarusian list of persons involved in “extremist” activities.³⁴ Several restrictive measures are applied against them.

In December 2022, the Belarusian parliament passed legislative amendments to 2002 law “On citizenship”³⁵, that would allow stripping Belarusians abroad of their citizenship for extremist activities and causing serious harm to the interests of Belarus. These amendments targeted critics in exile, as the listed crimes are often used in politically motivated charges, and trials often take place *in absentia* and without meaningful fair trial guarantees. UN officials condemned these changes as the abuse of anti-terrorist and anti-extremist legislation and policies.³⁶

Below are some recent cases of declaration of an organization an “extremist formation”. Anyone who cooperates with these organizations now or was in any form linked to it in the past can be persecuted “for participating in extremist activities”:

- In March 2023, the *Belarusian Association of Journalists* was declared an extremist formation;³⁷
- In August 2023, “*Viasna*” Human Rights Center was recognized as an “extremist formation”;³⁸
- In April 2024, the KGB recognized the website of the *Union of Poles in Belarus* znadniemna.pl “an extremist formation”;³⁹
- In May 2024, all 12 coalitions of candidates for the elections to the third composition of the Coordination Council were recognized by authorities as extremist formations.⁴⁰ This follows from the list on the website of the Ministry of Internal Affairs updated on May 16. More than 120 people are listed in it.

Currently, Belarus and Russia are working on combining their respective national lists of “extremists” and “extremist resources”,⁴¹ which means that Russia will be able to persecute persons on Belarussian lists without additional requests from Belarus.

Russia is assisting Belarus in the fight against the opposition not only within the framework of extradition procedures or official interstate cooperation in the search for persons included in the databases of terrorists and extremists, but in more radical ways as well. Former Belarusian investigator Andrei Astapovich, who publicly resigned during the 2020 Belarusian protests in response to police violence that he called “criminal”, was detained by Russian law enforcement officers, taken to the border with

Belarus with a bag on his head and a weight on his arm and told that their Belarusian colleagues would come for him. Several hours later, Astapovich was released in an area that the masked men said was on the border with Vitebsk Region in Belarus. Astapovich ran into a forest to avoid Belarusian security. He walked several days towards Poland where he applied for political asylum.⁴²

3. Impediments to mobility (such as passport cancellation and denial of consular services, preventing the target from travelling or causing them to be detained)

On September 4, 2023, Lukashenka signed a Decree No. 278, according to which the diplomatic missions of Belarus abroad were to stop issuing new passports to Belarusians abroad and renew the old ones.⁴³ The decree affected the estimated 200,000 to 500,000 Belarusians who live in exile. It requires those citizens who need to obtain a new passport or renew the current passport, to return to Belarus to process their documents. Obviously, in Belarus they may face an arrest and political prosecution if they are alleged to be critics of the government. Not only does the decree put Belarusians in exile at great risk if they return to Belarus, it also infringes on their ability to live, travel, work, and access essential services such as medical care if they remain abroad. By the same decree, they are also deprived of the opportunity to issue power of attorney and, accordingly, dispose of their property back home, which is indirectly used by the authorities expropriating it (see the relevant section below).

UN experts urged not to deport Belarusians with expired passports and to help them with alternative documents.⁴⁴ The United States have condemned a decree. U.S. State Department spokesman Matthew Miller said on September 7 that the decision to stop providing passport services in Belarusian consulates harms thousands of Belarusians living abroad and is “the latest in a long line of cynical rejections by the regime of its basic obligations to its people.”⁴⁵

Despite the apparent unity of the position of international bodies regarding the need to take urgent measures to support Belarusians in obtaining valid personal documents, only a small number of countries have taken practical steps in this direction.⁴⁶ However, many others are not ready to deal with this problem, ignoring the fact that tomorrow other authoritarian states will copy-paste the tools used by Lukashenka, and not hundreds of thousands, but millions of inhabitants of the planet will become illegal immigrants.⁴⁷ According to information that appeared in April 2024, it is possible that consular offices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation abroad will “temporarily suspend the registration of passports, the provision of notary services, services for the legalization and recovery of documents, and the resolution of citizenship issues”.⁴⁸

4. Threats from a distance

Apart from measures implemented outside of the territory of Belarus, the Lukashenka regime implements various measures on the territory of the country with the view to put pressure, intimidate, and repress those who left it. These tools include actions targeting a person's family, loved one or business partner, opening criminal investigation and holding trials in absentia of exiled opponents, expropriation of their property in Belarus. It is important to interpret the notion of the transnational repression as including all the range of possible repressive measures taken by states both within their territories and extraterritorially.

- **public and non-public warnings and threats, including those transmitted over the internet**

The Belarusian authorities and their propagandists have for several years publicly threatened activists abroad with passport cancellation, arrests, kidnapping and forcible export to Belarus. In 2021, commenting on the abduction of Raman Pratasevich, Deputy Chair of the Committee on International Affairs of the House of Representatives Aleh Haidukevich said that "Latushko and others can be detained on the territory of other states and brought here in the trunk, for example, and straight to jail!".⁴⁹

On April 25, 2024, at the session of the All-Belarusian People's Assembly, Aliaksandr Lukashenka threatened his opponents with repression against their relatives. He warned those who are "going to attack Belarus" that they "greatly harm their relatives." "You have some kind of property here. I advise you to forget about this property, but do not put your relatives at risk. I won't go on any further. You know what this can lead to," he said, thus escalating the ongoing wave of transborder repression targeting his critics in exile.⁵⁰ The security forces have already resorted to such measures. For examples of actions targeting a person's family, see information below.

- **actions targeting a person's family, loved one or business partner, based in the country of origin**

Rather than target a particular dissenter abroad, autocracies may choose to threaten or punish their family members back home. Coercion-by-proxy constitutes the actual or threatened use of physical or other sanctions against an individual within the territorial jurisdiction of a state, for the purpose of repressing a target individual residing outside its territorial jurisdiction.⁵¹

On January 31, 2022, the police detained Pavel Latushka's cousin, Anatol Latushka, allegedly for stenciling the coat of arms "Pagonia" on postboxes. According to his family, Anatoly was tortured at the police station by the police, who demanded from him to give away a phone password. It is known that at least 50 blows were inflicted on him. The police also put a plastic bag over his head. On September 20, Anatol Latushko was sentenced to six years in prison for the organization and preparation of actions that grossly violate public order, abuse of state symbols, hooliganism committed by a group of persons and illegal actions with respect to information about private life and personal data.⁵² Pavel Latushka is the deputy head of the United Transitional Cabinet.

Relatives of volunteers from Kalinousky's Regiment have been persecuted. Kalinousky's Regiment is an armed formation of Belarusian volunteers fighting on the side of Ukraine. In May 2022, Victoria Navitskaya, the sister of Jan Melnikau, the commander of the *Volat* battalion, part of the regiment, was detained. After 26 days in a pretrial detention center, she was charged with group actions grossly violating public order, and sentenced to one and a half years of imprisonment. In August 2022, Siarhei Franchuk, a cousin of Vadzim Kabanchuk, deputy commander of the regiment, was detained, charged with organization or active participation in group actions that violate public order, insulting the President of Belarus, insulting a representative of the authorities, and incitement to hostility, and sentenced to three years of imprisonment.⁵³

In August 2023, Artsiom Liabedzka, the son of politician Anatol Liabedzka, was sentenced to 3.5 years in prison. He was found guilty of "financing extremist activities". Anatol Liabedzka is a well-known opposition politician. In 2000-2018, he headed the *United Civic Party*. After that, he opened the Center for Research and Development Forecasts "*European Dialogue*". Now he resides outside Belarus and is the representative of Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya on constitutional reform and parliamentary cooperation. In January 2022, a criminal case was opened against him in Belarus.⁵⁴

On November 9, 2023, security officers came home to the parents of the famous Belarusian writer Sasha Filipenka with a search. Filipenka announced this in his blog. "My father was taken away. 'Say "thank you" to your son,' they said to my mother. It is obvious that they are putting pressure on me and want me to stop speaking out in the European press," he wrote. On November 10, it became known that the writer's father was arrested for 13 days for reposting an article by the *Zerkalo* media. Sasha Filipenka is a Belarusian writer whose novels have been translated into 16 European languages. Filipenka actively opposes the Lukashenka regime and the war unleashed by Putin in Ukraine. In 2020, he was forced to leave the country and now lives in Switzerland.⁵⁵

On November 30, 2023, Inessa Vorykhava, mother of Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya's adviser on youth policy and students, the head of the *RADA* youth organization, member of the group representing Belarus in the Council of Europe and of the advisory group at the EU, Margaryta Vorykhava, was detained by riot police right at the workplace. A telegram channel close to the security forces reported that she “received 15 days of administrative arrest as a warning for distribution of materials by e-mail and reposts” and threatened that “if she does not understand”, a criminal case will be opened against her.⁵⁶

On the same day, father of political activist Aliaksey Trubkin, 69-year-old Anatol Trubkin, was detained. He was sentenced to 15 days of arrest. The security forces also took a computer and books from his apartment.⁵⁷

In January 2024, the “*Viasna*” Human Rights Center reported about security forces' raids on relatives of those who had gone abroad. It is known about at least three cases when the security officers asked relatives of political emigrants to persuade them to return home. There are cases when security forces “made deals” of this kind with relatives, but after the emigrants' return, criminal cases were initiated against them.⁵⁸

- **hacking of e-mail and social media accounts**

The growth of extra-state repressive action in recent years is further buttressed by the wide availability of surveillance technology, through which autocracies are increasingly able to monitor, discipline, and punish dissenters abroad.⁵⁹ Transnational repression on social media takes many forms: harassment, explicit death threats, smear campaigns, malicious complaints to platforms about accounts and posts, and open-source surveillance.⁶⁰

The fact that emigrants began to receive electronic messages from the security forces became known in April 2024.⁶¹ For example, employees of the General Directorate for Combating Organized Crime and Corruption (GUBOPiK) extracted correspondence from a number of non-public emigrant chats and wrote to their participants. One of them received a message in the Telegram from the account called “Prevention of extremism. Tips.” The account's avatar shows the GUBOPiK building in Minsk. The security officer who revealed that he works in GUBOPiK, jokingly said in the message that no one is looking for this person in Belarus, he is not in the databases, and recommended him cleaning up comments in chat rooms if he decides to return home. Another person, who also received messages from the same account, said that, on the contrary, he was threatened that he would die in exile.⁶²

- ***opening criminal investigation and holding trials in absentia***

Since July 2022, the law allows Belarusians abroad to be tried *in absentia*, including sentencing them to death. The norm applies to those tried on charges of an act of terrorism, genocide, mercenary activities, treason, sabotage, creation of an extremist formation or participation in it, as well as under charges related to mass riots and calls for sanctions.⁶³ Since then, *in absentia* trials by the Lukashenka regime have become a widespread practice of dealing with the dissent. In recent months, the Investigative Committee has opened dozens of cases within the framework of “special proceedings”, and among the defendants are often not only politicians and activists, but also non-public persons.⁶⁴

In May 2024, the Investigative Committee opened a criminal case against all 257 participants in the upcoming elections to the Coordination Council.⁶⁵ The Coordination Council itself was called a “criminal group” that is engaged in “inspiring protest actions and mass riots, discrediting the constitutional foundations of the state, maintaining radical and protest potential, forcing the authorities to participate in the negotiation process from a position of blackmail, dictate and ultimatums, as well as directly seizing power unconstitutionally, including by force.” The criminal case against the opposition includes four charges: conspiracy to seize state power; calls for restrictive measures; creation of an extremist formation; and promotion of extremist activities.⁶⁶

Other *in absentia* political trials began in Belarus on May 31.⁶⁷ A trial against a group of activists began in the Brest Regional Court. Bloggers Andrei Pavuk, Illya Saliankou, Volha Pak, singer Marharyta Liauchuk, producer Aliaksandr Chekhouskai, musician Uladzislau Navazhylau are judged. All of them live abroad. The case involves 14 charges, including “facilitating extremist activities”, “insulting state symbols”, and “financing extremist activities”. The trial will be held behind closed doors.

On the same day in Minsk, a trial in the case of “Tsikhanouskaya analysts” began, in which 20 defendants are political scientists, sociologists, journalists, and researchers. People who conducted research and made public comments are accused of conspiring to seize power, calling for sanctions, participating in extremist formation, and inciting social hostility. The U.S. Embassy in Minsk stated that the case of the Tsikhanouskaya analysts is “another attack on human rights and freedom of speech” and “an attempt to silence dissidents and intimidate their families.”⁶⁸

On May 31, the Minsk City Court began to try Franak Vyachorka, an international affairs advisor to Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya. He was charged under nine articles of the Criminal Code.⁶⁹

This May, the Investigative Committee of Belarus announced the initiation of criminal cases against participants of the Freedom Day actions around the world.⁷⁰ According to the Investigative Committee, the list of suspects in the case of “Belarusians abroad” has been expanded by 104 names. Criminal cases on charges of creating an extremist formation and participating in it and discrediting the Republic of Belarus were open against participants of the actions in Warsaw, Vilnius, Wroclaw, Bialystok, Brussels, Batumi, Prague, Philadelphia, and other cities across the world. Information about real estate and other property of suspects located on the territory of Belarus was allegedly collected as part of the investigation. Investigative actions are currently being carried out: inspections, searches, seizure of property and “other procedural measures”. Freedom Day, also known as Independence Day, is celebrated on March 25, the anniversary of the declaration in 1918 of independence of the Belarusian People’s Republic, the first national state of Belarusians. In Soviet times, Freedom Day was celebrated secretly, after the collapse of the Soviet Union it briefly became a public holiday, but after coming of Lukashenka to power turned into a protest date. The authorities are trying to cancel and suppress it.

- ***property expropriation***

Mass searches of the homes of people associated with the Coordination Council, including Pavel Latushka, Yuras Gubarevich, Siarhei Chaly, Roza Turarbekaua, and employees of the People’s Anti-Crisis Management took place on November 28, 2023. In addition to searches, the courts issued 145 orders to seize the property of oppositionists abroad. “This is the largest repressive raid in recent times. I think it is connected with the elections in February 2024 in Belarus and the elections to the Coordination Council. The goal is to mobilize your electorate and intimidate the other side,” said the speaker of the Coordination Council Andrei Egorov.⁷¹ A Telegram channel associated with Belarusian law enforcement bodies directly linked the searches to the upcoming elections to the Coordinating Council.

Experts, however, note that the confiscation of property can affect everyone. According to the current legislation, the basis for this may be “unfriendly actions” towards the state. On this basis, the property can be seized from foreign states, persons from foreign states, as well as “affiliated persons”. The latter definition may relate to many. “Absolutely any person can be classified as affiliated, and therefore property can be seized from anyone,” comments *LegalHub*, a free and anonymous legal aid service.⁷²

In May 2024, the authorities continued to intimidate civil society by publishing videos and photographs of the arrested apartments of the members of the Coordination Council. The pro-government telegram channel published photos of apartments

sealed by the Investigative Committee, as well as videos showing housing and communal services workers and employees of the Ministry of Emergency Situations using special tools to break into apartments of people persecuted for their political views.⁷³

The authorities declare that they intend to deprive their political opponents of their property *en masse*. Recently, the Investigative Committee began threatening confiscation to hundreds of Belarusians who left Belarus and continue to be active abroad. Despite the fact that, according to the legislation, it is prohibited to sell a person's only housing to pay off damage, the authorities sold the apartments of opposition politicians Siarhei Tsikhanousky and Valery Tsapkala.⁷⁴ There is no reason to believe that this norm will be respected in the future.

The review of the use of various tools of transnational repression by the Lukashenka regime inside the country and extraterritorially demonstrates the regime's determination to silence its critics both within and outside Belarus' jurisdiction, as well as its confidence in impunity for its actions. Acts of transnational repression by Belarus constitute serious breaches of international human rights law. They instill fear among Belarusians inside and outside of the country. Moreover, abuse of international legal cooperation agreements, forced landing of a civilian aircraft, potential infiltration of the regime's agents into the territory of other states and their actions against exiled Belarusian dissenters represent a serious security threat. It is high time for the international community to take active steps to address the problem of transnational repression in Belarus. We suggest a few recommendations towards this goal.

Recommendations on urgent actions to address transnational repression in Belarus

To inter-governmental organizations:

- put the issue of transnational repression, including transnational repression by Belarus, high on their agenda and treat it as a multi-dimensional problem and a specific threat to human rights and security in the region;
- review and revise relevant documents to include additional guarantees against transnational repression;
- establish special bodies with the mandate to conduct research of transnational repression on the regional/global level, establish contacts with relevant diaspora communities and NGOs, systematically monitor manifestations of transnational repression, including transnational repression by Belarus, react to concrete

cases, and develop recommendations or guidelines to member states on combating, preventing, and eradicating transnational repression;

- take into consideration Belarus transnational repression practices while considering Belarus involvement and initiatives in the work of international bodies.

To the states:

- develop a comprehensive definition of transnational repression and pass legislation to address gaps in their respective governments' response to transnational repression;
- create interinstitutional working group which would include civil society organizations that monitor incidents of transnational repression, including transnational repression by Belarus, to review national practices to combat transnational repression;
- ensure government officials who may encounter perpetrators or victims of transnational repression, including transnational repression by Belarus, receive the training necessary to recognize and respond to the problem, and strengthening sanctions to make it easier to hold perpetrators accountable;
- facilitate, in accordance with international obligations, the acquisition of alternative travel and identity documents guaranteeing Belarusians who cannot return safely to their home country, access to essential services and the freedom of movement;
- establish a specific mechanism to track domestic incidents of transnational repression and identify the perpetrator governments;
- resist and oppose transnational repression by Belarus, including by denying requests for extradition of Belarusians under risk of politically motivated persecution, especially persons in the asylum procedure, holding humanitarian visas, and with a similar status; apply additional vetting to extradition requests and Interpol notices;
- review counterintelligence and law enforcement information-sharing practices and ensure that they effectively disseminate data about threats stemming from transnational repression by Belarus;
- review extradition, legal co-operation, readmission and return, and intelligence-sharing agreements with Belarus, and consider revising these agreements or terminating them;

- take active steps in pursuing further reforms of the Interpol and other mechanisms of international cooperation on legal matters;
- produce and distribute guidelines and hold trainings for the police, prosecutors, judges, intelligence services, and officials working with Belarus nationals on dealing with cases of transnational repression and providing protection to its targets;
- review the processes for issuing warnings and assigning police protection to Belarusian exiled individuals targeted by transnational repression, and provide assistance in relocation, when necessary;
- develop specific outreach strategies to connect relevant authorities with Belarusian diaspora communities and People's Embassies of Belarus;
- establish appropriate mechanisms for exiled Belarusian human rights defenders, journalists, and opposition activists to receive permanent legal status when needed, including providing humanitarian and other special visas,
- build resilience against the use of spurious terrorism and extremism charges against Belarusian nationals to distort host countries' asylum and extradition processes;
- review asylum processes and include details on the use of transnational repression in the information about Belarus that is consulted during reviews of asylum applications to ensure that exiled dissenters are not being denied legal status as a result of illegitimate criminal charges levelled against them; limit the use of temporary and subsidiary forms of protection for asylum seekers and instead grant full refugee status, decreasing exiled dissenters' reliance on identification documents from their home country which can be cancelled or put them at risk when needing to enter Belarus consulates or embassies for renewal, and allowing for family reunification, which reduces the threat of coercion by proxy;
- reflect information on transnational repression by Belarus in country reports on human rights.

Endnotes

- ¹ The term is sometimes referred to as extraterritorial or transborder repression.
- ² Yuri Dzhibradze. OSCE should take active steps to address the issue of transnational repression. Remarks at OSCE Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting on the Role of Civil Society in the Promotion and Protection of International Human Rights Law and International Humanitarian Law. 23 April 2024, Vienna.
- ³ Democratic states and international organisations should seriously engage in countering cross-border repression. Policy paper by iSANS, 2 February 2022.
- ⁴ Transnational repression as a growing threat to the rule of law and human rights. Resolution 2509 (2023) of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. 23 June 2023. <https://pace.coe.int/pdf/51e31a3077b82189f825d6a5fe39a22db808a80c2d9633f433b3211277cf6889/res.%202509.pdf>. Report by the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. Doc. 15787, 05 June 2023. <https://pace.coe.int/pdf/256e9019f883b202d16a9c4b4771cba8a8699a84efd6205d2c2f23ea9e244dd7/doc.%2015787.pdf>.
- ⁵ Transnational Repression: A Global Threat to Rights and Security. Written Testimony by Michael J. Abramowitz, President, Freedom House. Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing “Transnational Repression: Authoritarians Targeting Dissenters Abroad”. December 6, 2023 <https://freedomhouse.org/article/transnational-repression-global-threat-rights-and-security>.
- ⁶ Yana Gorokhovskaia, Nate Schenckan, Grady Vaughan, Still Not Safe: Transnational Repression in 2022, (Washington, DC: Freedom House, April 2023). https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/2023-04/FH_TransnationalRepression2023_0.pdf, p. 1.
- ⁷ Andrew Rettman. Exclusive: Lukashenko plotted murders in Germany. EU Observer 04.01.2021 <https://euobserver.com/foreign/150486>.
- ⁸ <https://p.dw.com/p/13ROe>.
- ⁹ <https://www.svoboda.org/a/belorusy-begut-v-rossiyu/31280925.html>.
- ¹⁰ For instance, recently published US State Department’s annual report on the human rights situation in the world in 2023, which includes country reports for various states, including Belarus, does not identify trans-national repression by Belarus as a large-scale problem. <https://www.state.gov/reports/2023-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/belarus>.
- ¹¹ See: “We Will Find You”. A Global Look at How Governments Repress Nationals Abroad. Human Rights Watch. 2024 <https://www.hrw.org/report/2024/02/22/we-will-find-you/global-look-how-governments-repress-nationals-abroad>; and “Still Not Safe” (5).
- ¹² Andrew Rettman. Exclusive: Lukashenko plotted murders in Germany. EU Observer 04.01.2021 <https://euobserver.com/foreign/150486>.
- ¹³ <https://belsat.eu/en/news/23-05-2021-ryanair-plane-s-forced-landing-in-minsk-results-in-arrest-of-journo-raman-pratasevich-belarus-authorities-list-him-as-terrorist>.
- ¹⁴ “We Will Find You” (5) p. 14.
- ¹⁵ Still Not Safe (5). p. 4.
- ¹⁶ <https://www.dw.com/ru/mogut-li-belorusskie-siloviki-dotanutsa-do-uehavsih-iz-belarusi/a-68187350>.
- ¹⁷ <https://belsat.eu/en/news/minsk-demands-warsaw-extradite-creators-of-nexta-telegram-channels>.
- ¹⁸ <https://p.dw.com/p/13ROe>.
- ¹⁹ Olga Dobrovolskaya. Persecution of Belarusian citizens abroad. Dictatorship exploits international criminal mechanism to persecute activists. iSANS, 29.11.2021 <https://isans.org/articles-en/persecution-of-belarusian-citizens-abroad.html>.
- ²⁰ <https://euroradio.fm/ru/vlasti-belarusi-dlya-zaderzhaniya-politaktivista-zadeystvovali-interpol>.
- ²¹ <https://euroradio.fm/ru/vengriya-otkazalas-vydavat-v-minsk-volontera-s-okrestina>.

²² <https://cpj.org/ru/2024/05/кэж-призывает-сербии-не-экстрадировать/>; <https://reform.news/uzhissera-andreja-gnjota-uhudshilos-zdorove-v-belgradskoj-tjurne-nau>.

²³ Andrei Titov. The use of INTERPOL in the search for opponents of the Lukashenko regime. An external repressive body. iSANS, 27.12.2021 <https://isans.org/columns-en/the-use-of-interpol-in-the-search-for-opponents-of-the-lukashenko-regime.html>.

²⁴ *ibid.*

²⁵ <https://www.dw.com/ru/v-rossii-po-zaprosu-minska-zaderzan-doktor-martov-cto-budet-dalse/a-69102688>.

²⁶ Yana Gorokhovskaia and Isabel Linzer, *Defending Democracy in Exile: Policy Responses to Transnational Repression* (Washington, DC: Freedom House, June 2022), https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/2022-06/Complete_TransnationalRepressionReport2022, p. 4.

²⁷ Lukashenko's long arm. Russia is arresting and extraditing Belarusian nationals being persecuted for taking part in opposition protests. Meduza, 06.12.2021 <https://meduza.io/en/feature/2021/12/06/lukashenko-s-long-arm>.

²⁸ For example, Aliaksei Kudzin, a mixed martial arts fighter who had allegedly been beaten and shot with rubber bullets while in police custody in Belarus, was unlawfully deported from Russia even after the European Court of Human Rights issued an opinion stating that he was at risk of being tortured if returned (Yana Gorokhovskaia and Isabel Linzer (22), p. 4. Another example is Vadzim Duboiski, who has been held in a Russian pre-trial detention center for ten months facing extradition at the request of Belarusian security forces. Memorial has recognized him as a political prisoner. (Правозащитный центр «Мемориал», 01.02.2022 https://memohrc.org/ru/news_old/memorial-priznal-politzyaklyuchyonnym-uchastnika-protestov-v-belarusi-kotoromu-grozit).

²⁹ Призыв в защиту белорусов в России. Московская Хельсинкская группа. 25.05.2021 <https://mhg.ru/prizyv-v-zashchitu-belarusov-v-rossii>.

³⁰ https://t.me/cbs_help/4040.

³¹ https://t.me/cbs_help/4041.

³² <https://reform.news/belarus-i-kazahstan-obsudili-voprosy-vydachi-ljudej-v-mezhgosudarstvennom-rozyske>.

³³ <https://humanconstant.org/obzor-borby-s-ekstremizmom-v-belarusi-za-oktyabr-dekabr-2023/#i-15>.

³⁴ <https://reform.news/mvd-dobavilo-v-sписок-jekstremistov-eshhe-22-cheloveka>.

³⁵ <https://president.gov.by/ru/events/vneseny-popravki-v-zakon-o-grazhdanstve-respubliki-belarus>.

³⁶ The UN Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights, Nada Al-Nashif, noted that these changes in the legislation of Belarus create “a danger of the appearance of stateless persons” and “a large space for abuse.” (<https://www.ohchr.org/en/statements-and-speeches/2023/09/statement-situation-human-rights-belarus>) The abuse of anti-terrorist and anti-extremist legislation and policies to persecute peaceful critics of the regime was also noted in Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Belarus, Anaïs Marin (Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Belarus, Anaïs Marin. 25 August 2023. A/78/327 <https://reliefweb.int/report/belarus/report-special-rapporteur-situation-human-rights-belarus-anais-marin-a78327-enarruzh>).

³⁷ <https://belsat.eu/ru/news/17-05-2024-po-mestu-registratsii-zamestitelya-predsedatelya-belaruskoj-assotsiatsii-zhurnalistov-proshel-obysk>.

³⁸ https://x.com/unhumanrights/status/1694987349216661746?s=46&t=HslNEAJaPiQ8mRiFi0w_6Q.

³⁹ <https://www.polskieradio.pl/397/7836/Artykul/3358062,белорусское-кгб-признало-сайт-союза-поляков-в-беларуси-znaniem-na-prilozhenii-«экс-тремистским-формированием»>.

⁴⁰ <https://pozirk.online/ru/news/85440/>.

⁴¹ <https://belsat.eu/ru/news/06-02-2024-povodov-dlya-presledovaniya-stanet-bolshe-belarus-i-rossiya-hotyat-obedinit-spiski-ekstremistov-i-ekstremistskih-resursov>.

⁴² Ксения Чурманова, Анна Пушкарская. "Ты словил этого красавца?" Как люди Лукашенко охотятся за белорусами в России. Би-би-си. 03.12.2021 <https://www.bbc.com/russian/features-59513839>.

⁴³ <https://news.zerkalo.io/economics/48123.html>.

⁴⁴ The statement signed by Anaïs Marin, Special Rapporteur on Belarus, Mary Lawlor, Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders, Clément Nyaletsossi Voule, Special Rapporteur on freedom of peaceful

assembly and of association, Irene Khan, Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Opinion and Expression, and Fionnuala Ní Aoláin, Special Rapporteur on counter-terrorism and human rights stated that the decree constitutes a misuse of security measures and is part of a deliberate policy to punish Belarusian exiles, including human rights defenders, journalists and members of the opposition for their perceived political disloyalty. “If these exiles returned to Belarus, they would be exposed to high risk of persecution,” the experts underlined, urging Belarusian authorities to withdraw the decree and conduct consular services as set out in the 1963 Vienna Convention on consular relations. They urged UN Member States to facilitate, in accordance with international obligations, the acquisition of alternative travel and identity documents guaranteeing Belarusians who cannot return safely to their home country access to essential services and the freedom of movement. (<https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/09/belarus-presidential-decree-denying-consular-services-puts-belarusians>).

⁴⁵ <https://www.rferl.org/a/belarus-passport-decree-condemned/32583068.html>.

⁴⁶ Belarusian emigrants in Lithuania will be able to receive special Lithuanian travel documents (an alien passport). Such passports will be issued to Belarusian citizens who have the right to reside in Lithuania but do not have a passport or a corresponding travel document, the Interior Ministry said. It will allow them to leave and enter Lithuania. It is valid for more than one year presently, but there is a possibility that this term will be prolonged by the parliament (<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/world/lithuania-to-issue-special-passports-to-belarus-citizens-staying-legally-in-the-baltic-country>).

Since January 2022, Belarusians can obtain an alien passport through a simplified procedure in Poland until June 30, 2024. Poland has also abandoned the requirement of additional evidence that one cannot obtain a passport through standard procedures. The alien passport has been recognized as an identification document in the interpretation of the Polish Ministry of the Interior, not just a travel document. (<https://tsikhanouskaya.org/en/news/legalization-of-stay-in-poland-where-can-belarusians-get-help.html#:~:text=%E2%9C%94%EF%B8%8F%20Since%20January%202022%2C%20Belarusians,or%20permanently%20can%20obtain%20it>). A working group at the Polish Ministry of the Interior has been created to find legal solutions to help Belarusians living in exile. Most likely, the Polish travel document will be issued for 3 years, Vice Minister of the Interior and Administration Maciej Dushcyk noted. The Ministry is also looking for a solution that would allow Belarusians to simplify the procedure for legalizing children in Poland. (https://t.me/cbs_help/4115)

Austria will recognize expired Belarusian passports as valid. There's no need to renounce Belarusian citizenship to obtain an alien passport. It is planned to develop instructions for the legalization of stay for Belarusians in Austria. (<https://tsikhanouskaya.org/en/news/austria-will-recognize-expired-belarusian-passports.html>)

The Swedish Migration Agency issued a legal position on passports for Belarusian citizens. The agency stated that Belarusians are deprived of the opportunity to replace their expired passports at embassies, so now the Swedish authorities will officially consider that Belarusian citizens “do not have the opportunity to obtain a document valid as a passport within a reasonable period of time.” In this regard, the migration service will issue a foreigner's passport or other document to Belarusians who are in Sweden and cannot obtain a passport, so that a residence permit could be put in a document. (<https://belsat.eu/ru/news/27-03-2024-shvetsiya-nachnet-vydavat-belarusam-s-prosrochennymi-dokumentami-pasporta-inostrantsa>).

A Belarusian family in Slovenia finally managed to receive the first passport of a foreigner for their nine year-old son after facing difficulties due to the ignorance of the employee of the body responsible for issuing passports to foreigners. Their claim was supported by the *People's Embassy of Belarus in Slovenia* which prepared requests to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Department of Administrative Units to clarify the procedure in order to avoid a time gap in the validity of documents, and to recognize the danger of returning to Belarus as the basis for recognizing the impossibility of obtaining a passport (<https://nashaniva.com/ru/339420>).

Germany promises to accept applications for a travel document from Belarusians with expired, i.e. invalid passports, and consider their applications on an individual basis. (<https://novayagazeta.ru/articles/2024/04/09/dukhovnye-pravniki-nansena>).

⁴⁷ <https://novayagazeta.ru/articles/2024/04/09/dukhovnye-pravniki-nansena>.

⁴⁸ <https://novayagazeta.ru/articles/2024/04/25/v-mide-rossii-obsuzhdaiut-zapret-na-vydachu-i-zamenu-dokumentov-za-granitsei-news>.

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- ⁵⁰ <https://reform.news/lukashenko-na-vns-ugrozhal-rodstvennikam-svoih-opponentov>.
- ⁵¹ Gerasimos Tsourapas (46), p. 627.
- ⁵² <https://belsat.eu/ru/news/07-11-2023-davlenie-cherez-rodstvennikov-pozornyj-instrument-belaruskogo-rezhima>.
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- ⁵⁸ <https://t.me/viasna96/24111>.
- ⁵⁹ Gerasimos Tsourapas, *Autocracies: Strategies of Transnational Repression, Legitimation, and Co-Optation in World Politics*. *International Studies Review* (2021) 23, p. 621.
- ⁶⁰ Yana Gorokhovskaia and Isabel Linzer (22), p. 31.
- ⁶¹ <https://news.zerkalo.io/life/66168.html>.
- ⁶² *ibid.*
- ⁶³ <https://www.dw.com/ru/lukashenko-razreshil-zaochno-sudit-uehavshih-iz-rb-obvinjaemyh/a-62560031>.
- ⁶⁴ <https://www.dw.com/ru/zaocnye-ugolovnye-dela-v-belarusi-postavili-na-potok/a-68748956>.
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