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News | 16.02.2012

## Belarus

### Politically-motivated show trials are not acceptable



The European Parliament today adopted a [resolution](#) on the situation in Belarus regarding the recent death sentences and harassment of human rights activists. Following credible reports of an unfair trial and an investigation marred by serious human rights abuses and intentional disregard of important evidence, the resolution condemned the death sentences and the continuous persecution of human rights defenders. After the vote, Green MEP and member of the Foreign Affairs Committee **Werner Schulz** said: The resolution contains an unambiguous message to Alexander Lukashenko: The EU does not accept the death sentences of Dzmitry Kanavalau and Uladzislau Kavalyou or the imprisonment of Ales Bialiatski. These are politically-motivated show trials comparable to those of the Stalin era. We demand the repeal of these unjust judgements and an immediate release of all political prisoners in Belarus. This is an absolute precondition for any new offers of dialogue from the EU. EU member states must continue the pressure on the regime by imposing economic sanctions, thereby depriving the regime of its financial foundations and pushing forward regime change in Belarus. **Barbara Lochbihler**, Green MEP and Chairwoman of the Human Rights Subcommittee explained: Despite the worldwide trend of abandonment or complete abolition of the death penalty, the Belarusian government remains the only European government that continues with this cruel and inhumane practice. It must be made clear to president Lukashenko, who likes to underline Belarus' place in Europe, that state-ordered killings are incompatible with our European values. Approximately 400 people have been executed in Belarus since its declaration of independence, at least four of them in the last two years. Today, Dzmitry Kanavalau and Uladzislau Kavalyou are to be executed. These court orders follow unfair trials which disregarded the rule of law and are probably based on confessions obtained through torture. As the execution of Mr Kanavalau and Mr Kavalyou can be carried out any time from now, the international community has to increase the pressure at all costs. We have to force the government in Minsk to drop the enforcement of the death penalties and abolish the

death penalty immediately.

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