

Media Release

Freedom of Religion for Belarus

Libereco starts a photo-petition for a basic human right in Europe's last dictatorship

The Human Rights Organisation *Libereco – Partnership for Human Rights* calls on the president of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenka, to ensure respect for freedom of religion in Belarus and to end the intimidation and harassment of Christians.

The Russian-Orthodox church in Belarus enjoys an exceptional position with close ties to the state authorities. In contrast non-Russian-Orthodox Christians as well as members of other persuasions undergo restrictions of their freedom of religion. The 2002 Belarusian Religions Law criminalises all non-state registered denominations. Holding services in private flats as well as public mission are prohibited.

Currently, especially the Christian New Life Church in Minsk is strongly affected by governmental repression. The community is fearing to be dislodged from its own land. Furthermore, the church was charged with alleged environmental contamination and ordered to pay a fine of approximately 100.000 USD in February 2010. If the church does not pay this fine, its pastor will face a trial and could be sentenced to prison.

Libereco starts a photo petition on www.lphr.org to protest against the violation of freedom of religion in Belarus and calls on everybody to show their support for the respect of human rights in Europe's last dictatorship.

Libereco - Partnership for Human Rights is a human rights organisation, founded in 2009, and fighting for the political and civil human rights. Libereco is focussing on authoritarian regimes, with Belarus as its first focus. Libereco is a non-religious and non-party organisation.

Please find further informations as well as banners on our website: www.lphr.org

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