

The information is aggregated from open online sources and our own practice. In these newsletters, we will update you in brief on everyday human rights violations in numbers and facts.

## **Saturday 19 November 2022 to Friday 2 December 2022**

Arbitrary detentions of people for political reasons continue in Belarus. [Every day](#), human rights activists report detentions and court indictments for participating in protest actions, criticizing the authorities on social networks, and spreading information objectionable to the regime. In addition to the general trends of politically motivated persecution, characteristic of the period 2020-2022, the analyzed period is marked by certain features: the practice of unlimited extension of administrative arrest against representatives of civil society is expanding, targeted investigations of political activists remaining in Belarus, detentions of people on suspicion of leaking personal data of regime representatives and other repressive practices.

### **Repeated re-detention of dissenters**

On 29 November 2022, Belarusian human rights defender Anastasia Loika ([Nasta Lojka](#)) was sentenced to serve her fifth administrative jail term for her human rights work. On 26 November 2022, the priest [Vladislav Bahamolnikau](#) was re-detained and will serve administrative jail for the seventh time in a row. On 12 November 2022, Lojka and Bahamolnikau [were recognized as political prisoners](#).

[Amnesty International](#) and [World Organisation Against Torture \(OMCT\)](#) launched their urgent action campaigns to call on the regime's official bodies to immediately release Nasta Lojka and other political prisoners, investigate alleged acts of torture and ill-treatment against her, and guarantee her physical integrity and psychological well-being. Human Rights Watch [contacted](#) several special procedures regarding the groundless and politically motivated persecution of Nasta Lojka – the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders; the United Nations Special Rapporteur on torture; the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Belarus; the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights; the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention.

Nasta reported being tortured during serving her jail terms – the police officers hit her with a stun gun, forced her to spend 8 hours in the jail's inner yard with no warm clothes on, denied her food and hygienic essentials packages, as well as requested medical assistance.

### **Pressure on former activists of the political movement “For Freedom”**

From 23 to 28 November 2022, security forces engaged in mass persecution of activists of the [political movement “For Freedom.”](#) Law enforcement officers conducted searches of 13 activists' houses, including Georgy Stankevich, Alexey Atroschenko, Vladimir Katsora, Olga Damaskina. The officers were interested in information about the leader of the movement, Yuri Gubarevich, whom the popular opposition politician Pavel Latushko appointed as his deputy. After conducting searches and interrogations, some participants of the movement were asked to sign a document stating that they undertake not to violate criminal law, in particular Article 356 of the Criminal Code (“High Treason”). One of the activists [Olga Bolbat](#) was arrested for 10 days on unknown grounds.

### **Online harassment for negative comments about the death of Minister of Foreign Affairs Vladimir Makei**

On 30 November, 2022, pro-government sources stated that employees of the Main Directorate for Combating Organized Crime and Corruption (GUBOPiK) identified [more than 20 persons in Belarus and 50 persons abroad](#) who, in a “destructive hysteria,” decided to

insult the memory of the Foreign Minister Vladimir Makei, [who died suddenly](#) on 26 November 2022. Telegram channels close to the security forces noted that all these persons “will inevitably face detention and imprisonment.” As of 1 December 2022, “confession videos” with at least 4 detained people were published on pro-government channels in which they admitted leaving cynical comments about Makei's death. For example, one of the people [was detained](#) for the comment “wrong person again” under the post about Makei's death.

### **Mass persecution for the transfer of personal data of civil servants**

In November 2022, it became known that the [personal data of 8.5 to 10 thousand people](#) who sent information to the initiative to deanonymize the security forces and civil servants involved in human rights violations “Black Book of Belarus” could fall into the hands of the security forces because of a hidden agent GUBOPiK found in the ranks of the initiative. Simultaneously with the appearance of this information, mass detentions of people suspected of collaborating with this initiative have intensified.

For example, on 25 November 2022 [a leading engineer of Minskenergo](#) was detained in Minsk on charges of “inciting hostility” (Article 130 of the Criminal Code). On 30 November 2022, it was reported about the detention of [5 employees of a metal rolling plant](#) in Miory. Such accusations subsequently lead to harsh court verdicts. For example, on 29 November and 2 December 2022, the Minsk City Court sentenced a [former employee of the Prosecutor's office](#) and [former employee of the Investigative Committee](#) to 6 years in prison and to 7 years in prison respectively for leaking data about security forces to “protest information resources.”

### **The use of anti-extremist legislation to persecute dissenters**

On 26 November 2022, the representative of the Investigative Committee Anatoly Vasiliev noted that since 2020, [more than 11 thousand crimes](#) of “extremist nature” have been recorded in Belarus, while 4.3 thousand of such crimes were registered in 2022. Anti-extremism laws, with their overbroad formulations, [are routinely used to prosecute people](#) for “protest-related” crimes as well as prevent the self-organization of civil society, suppressing the rights to freedom of expression, freedom of peaceful assembly, and freedom of association.

### **Political prisoners**

The total number of political prisoners in Belarus is [1448](#). The number continues to grow daily.