

Belarus is the third smallest country in Europe.

Alena Areshka

VIOLATION OF CULTURAL RIGHTS IN BELARUS

The violation of culture-related human rights is widespread and frequent in Belarus. It is generally known that human rights are protected both on the international and national levels. International human rights standards are developed. Individual countries then bring their legislation in line with those international standards. The Republic of Belarus declares that all its legislative acts conform with the basic provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights under which every person has the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion (Art. 18). The Republic of Belarus ratified the International Pact on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights. Under Article 15 of the Pact every person has the right to participate in cultural life, use the achievements of scientific progress and its practical applications, the protection of their moral and material interests that may appear in relation to any scientific, literary, or artistic work. Every participant country in the Pact is to respect freedom that is unconditionally necessary for scientific research or creative work, and acknowledge the benefits of developing and encouraging international contacts and co-operation in science and culture. On the national level, Belarus has brought its laws in line with international standards. Thus, according to the Belarusian constitution, every citizen of Belarus has the right to

education (Art. 48); to retain their ethnic identity, to use their mother tongue, to choose a language for communicating with other people (Art. 50); the right to freedom of artistic, scientific or technical creativity and teaching (Art. 51). Moreover, every citizen is guaranteed freedom of thought, opinion and free expression (Art. 33); while censorship as well as the monopolisation of the mass media by the state, non-governmental associations or individuals are not allowed (Art. 33).

The Law on Culture in the Republic of Belarus was adopted in 1991. Under this law, enterprises and institutions of art and culture are independent in terms of choosing their artistic programmes and repertoire, and have the right to promote and distribute works of art and culture in various genres, forms and styles. Officials or state institutions have no right, unless provided with adequate motivation, to ban, limit or stop cultural actions, exhibitions, publications or performances of art works or other products of cultural activity intended for public display or distribution. In cases when cultural actions are stopped or limited, those concerned have the right to legal redress in a court of law concerning the related decision made by an official or an organ of government (Art. 24). The Republic of Belarus guarantees freedom of publishing and distribution of printed products regulated by its legislation (Art. 29).

In reality, however, all these rights are highly limited by various legal acts that essentially regulate culture-related issues. Since 1997, the freedom to publish has become dependent on a number of provisions. For instance, the resolution of the State Press Committee issued on 21 May 1997 to establish principles for issuing and using publishing licences has ipso facto strongly limited freedom of publishing due to the very need to obtain a licence from the state. In order to obtain a licence, a full-time employee of the applying publishing house (with a related degree and at least three years of work experience in the publishing business) has to pass a qualification test. Andrey Fyadorchanka, an expert publisher of the Humanitarian Foundation "Nasha Niva," who met all of the above-mentioned requirements, failed the qualification test in late 1997. He was unofficially informed that he would never pass the examination because he be-



Artur Klinau, the "Columbarium of World Literature" project

longed to a publishing house that printed independent literature. Indeed, after the authorities suspended all publishing licences on 1 December 1998, most of the independent printers failed to renew them and have since placed orders elsewhere (including foreign publishers). As a result, publishing costs borne by Belarusian NGOs increased.

Similarly, the resolution on the state registration (re-registration) of political parties, trade unions and other non-governmental organisations stated that after the year 2000, all parties, unions and organisations have to register (or re-register) within a certain period of time. The time limitation and multitude of minute formalities allow the authorities to selectively choose the NGOs it will (re)register. The Justice Department of the Minsk City Executive Committee denied registration to the non-governmental association "Cultural Contact" on 7 February 2000 on the pretext that its statutes contradicted legal requirements. A second attempt to register, after the statutes had been adjusted with respect to the necessary formalities, also failed on the same grounds. Members of "Cultural Contact" were informed by an employee of the Justice Department that an order came down "from above" not to register the association that had spontaneously staged a series of large-scale international non-governmental activities including the "Minsk Spring 2000" International Theatre and Music Festival. Therefore, despite the fact that Belarus has ratified international documents that impose certain obligations, and national legislation conforms to international standards, the state violates human rights in the sphere of culture. Consequently, the cultural originality and independence of this European nation is being abolished and conditions are being created for the elimination of its identity. The mass of legal acts, their subjective interpretation and the lack of appropriate opportunities for redress to an independent court authority make the activity of many artists and non-governmental cultural institutions semi-legal.

Other than applying pressure by legal means, the present authorities frequently use other prohibited methods. For example, the government censors or bans selected books, periodicals, art exhibitions and films by issuing a spoken order or through a telephone call. Occasionally, the governing bodies of creative associations are forced to issue those bans. It should be kept in mind that due to the lack of national business circles that could sponsor domestic cultural activity, all such associations are fully dependent on the state budget. It should also be noted that incomes in the field of culture are among the lowest in the country. The grounds for issuing a ban can also be a subjective interpretation of Article 24 of the Law on Culture: "It is prohibited to distribute works that call for the violent dismantling or changing of the constitutional state order, promote war, violence, and cruelty; racial, national, or religious hatred, or pornography." Another method of suppressing cultural life independent of the state is the creation of unbearable economic conditions for publishers and galleries that are taxed as regular com-

mercial enterprises. Over the past five years, some nationally well-known art galleries have disappeared, including "Shostaya Liniya" (The Sixth Line), "Kawcheg" (The Ark), and "Alter Ego" in Minsk and "Zyalyony Dom" (Green House) in Homel. As a result, cultural figures that are trying to retain creative independence and a civic conscience are being forced out of cultural life. Many have had to temporarily or permanently leave the country. Vasil Bykau and Svyatlana Aleksiyevech are two examples of artists who have had to emigrate in order to live and work. The scale of artists emigrating from the country, especially young artists, is frighteningly large.

The regime has also increased pressure on academic and university freedoms — freedoms that Europe has cultivated for centuries. This is evidenced by the fact that rectors of higher educational institutions are appointed not on the basis of qualifications but on the basis of loyalty to the government. The curricula of higher and secondary schools are forced to follow the ideological provisions of the Lukashenka regime. Textbooks written during the first years after Belarus declared its independence were virtually banned and abolished a few years ago. They have been replaced with "new" textbooks in which old Soviet dogmas are restored and imperialist ideas of "Slavic unity" predominate. These essentially racist and fascist ideas adopted by the ruling regime are disseminated with the assistance of the state-owned media, forced into the educational system, beautified by a few obedient artists, composers and writers as well as promoted through state budget-funded festivals.

Current government policy includes the elimination of the Belarusian language (in a country in which more than 70% of the population is Belarusian). The native language is being forced out of education, media, science, and the arts. The number of schools in which the language of instruction is Belarusian has declined several times during the past four years; print runs of books are lower; the Belarusian language is rarely heard on state-owned radio and TV. Human rights organisations are noting incidents of the police arresting and beating people for speaking Belarusian in the streets. Performances of Belarusian rock bands who sing about love and freedom in the native language are being banned (see Appendix) while pro-fascist Russian rock bands are allowed to give concerts unhindered.

Censorship is also applied in the theatre and visual arts. The authorities forced the Minsk theatre "Volnaya Stsen" (Free Stage) to change its name to the Laboratory Theatre of Belarusian Drama. The play *The Rise of Arthur VI*, a work with anti-totalitarian overtones, had to overcome many obstacles in order to premier. In September 2000 the Belarusian Ministry of Culture fired Valery Mazynski, the theatre's director of plays, and thereby eliminated a renowned Belarusian theatre group despite numerous appeals to the Ministry in support of Mazynski. Belarusian visual artists are becoming subject to stricter regulations. In 1995 and 1996 exhibitions of the "Pahonya" art group, traditionally held on 25

March (the day the Belarusian Popular Republic declared its independence in 1918) were censored and some of its works were removed from the exhibition. In 1997 the exhibition was open to the public for only two days. In 1998 the organisers only managed to stage the exhibition in some independent centres in the provinces.

State-run book publishing houses are subject to severe censorship. The board of the Belarusian Encyclopaedia was completely replaced and ideologically incompatible articles were removed from already produced and laid-out volumes. The publication of popular books on history written by independent authors is hindered (e.g., *Whence Our Kin* by Uladzimir Arlow). Entire sections of some historical works (e.g., *Belarus on Historical Crossroads* by American Professor Jan Zaprudnik) are simply not printed.

It is obvious that the authorities are not interested in national culture, but even worse, they are hostile toward it. This particularly applies to the present-day, avant-guard phenomena in Belarusian culture. The combination of the country's financial crisis and the implementation of government policy under president Lukashenka is taking Belarusian culture to the edge of destruction. The Appendix contains particular incidents of this between 1998 and 2001. From this list an objective picture emerges of present Belarusian society and relations between the state and the individual as well as between the state and society.



Ihar Tsishin, installation

1998

DECEMBER

The Minister of Education, Mr. Dylyan, banned the study of the creative school of Belarusian writers, including N. Arsenyeva and M. Syadnyow (Belarusian emigrants to the USA) and the poet L. Heniush, who had never accepted Soviet citizenship in the protest against Russia's annexation of Belarus.

30 DECEMBER

The newspaper "Svaboda" (Liberty) published an appeal by the International Helsinki Committee

for Human Rights, in which deep concern and indignation was expressed about the fact that the film director Yury Khashchevatski was beaten up last December. The appeal also stated that Mr. Khashchevatski is a famous Belarusian film director who directed *Ordinary President*, a documentary about Aleksander Lukashenka in which the Belarusian president is portrayed in an unflattering light. The film was very popular in the world and won a special prize at the Berlin Film Festival last year. However, in Belarus *Ordinary President* was banned and could be seen only underground. In December of last year unidentified people broke into Mr. Khashchevatski's studio and beat him severely. The appeal, addressed to president Lukashenka, stresses that the perpetrators stole nothing from the studio so the attack was most likely politically motivated. On behalf of the organisation, the Executive Director of the Helsinki Committee's European Department, Holy Cartner, demanded the Belarusian president make every effort to find and punish those responsible. The Helsinki Committee also called upon president Lukashenka to allow the public screening of *Ordinary President* in Belarus.

JANUARY

A group of well-known Belarusian writers visited the city and region of Harodnya where many meetings, co-sponsored by the Harodnya Board of the Belarusian Popular Front (BPF) and the Fellowship of the Belarusian Language, were held. However, the administrations in the town of Skidal and the village of Kaptsewka illegally banned the meetings in their respective areas.

FEBRUARY

The Supreme Court of the Republic of Belarus upheld the ruling of the Leninski District of Harodnya and thereby dismissed the claim of Yury Matsko, father of Agata Matsko who went to a Belarusian-language class in secondary school No 10. When Agata was transferred to a Russian-language class, her father demanded that his daughter continue her education in Belarusian. The school administration refused, and the court supported this decision that contradicts both the Constitution and the Law on Languages.

19 FEBRUARY

Uladzimir Plaksa, an employee of the state-owned enterprise "BelAeroNavigation," appealed to the Belarusian Helsinki Committee seeking assistance in defending his right to the unrestricted use of Belarusian as an official language. "I have been speaking Belarusian for four or five years. Accordingly, I am drawing up technical documentation also in Belarusian. Last year I experienced some pressure from the administration." Yury Kladaw, an assistant to the enterprise's director, stated that the ban on the Belarusian language was motivated by the Statutes of IKAO (an international organisation of countries participating in air

navigation). Together with his application, Mr. Plaksa enclosed a copy of the minutes of a meeting held by the staff of Minsk Aerodynamic Section of "BelAeroNavigation" held on 30 June 1997. One of the items on the meeting's agenda was Mr. Kladaw's ban on using Belarusian in technical documents and control communication.

9 APRIL

The Ministry of Culture demanded, among other things, the stage be redesigned for a play staged by the "Lipavichki" Puppet Theatre in Harodnya. The script was written by Uladzimir Halubka and the play directed by Alyaksey Lyalyawski, the play director of the Minsk Puppet Theatre. Ministry critics did not like the decorations (a four-metre high national emblem towering above a Belarusian village, walls papered with issues of "Soviet Byelorussia," the BSSR anthem played three times through a street loud-speaker in the finale, etc).

22 APRIL

A poster featuring the Belarusian president in a Napoleon-style hat was censored from an exhibition of W. Miranenka's work in Homel.

23 APRIL

The Co-ordinating Council for the Protection of National Heritage in the Berastsye Regional Executive Committee compiled a list of the least valuable historical buildings, which would be subject to demolition. The idea to "clean the towns of the region from unsightly historical monuments" was advanced by the committee's chairman, Henadz Masko. In his opinion, many of the state-protected buildings were an eye sore because there was no money for their restoration.

30 APRIL

Director Anatol Alay produced a documentary titled *Hastela* in the "Letapis" (Chronicle) studio of "Belarusfilm." The film attempted to shed light on the details concerning the mysterious death of the Soviet era hero and fighter pilot Hastela, who rammed his plane into an enemy plane. The mystery deepened when it was discovered during the pilot's reburial in 1950 that his grave contained the remains of other people. According to Alay's version, Hastela could have been captured and might still be alive. The film was produced with state funds in the "Letapis" studio. The Ministry of Culture did not pass the film, granted it the status of "filmottheque material" and archived it. The director's attempt to convince decision-makers that the cinematographic investigation should be continued using government resources was met with resistance from Minister Alaksandar Sasnowski.

6 MAY

Four photographs were censored from the exhibition *In the Search of Belarus 12 Years after Chernobyl*, conceived by Swiss journalist Peter Hagi and art photographer Hugo Eggi together with Belarusian journalist Syamyon Bukchyn and photographer Syarhey Brushko. The exhibition is the result of the authors travelling around Belarus. The authors published an album which, as well as the exhibition, was financed by Swiss sponsors. The exhibition was first shown in Switzerland and then came to Minsk. Three out of the four photos banned in Minsk were connected with the newspaper "Svaboda" and its banning. Those photos were also cut out of the album. In addition, the censors "cleaned up" the text cutting out a paragraph about "Svaboda." As a result, the Belarusian edition of the album differs from its Swiss counterpart by four blank spots representing the censored photographs.



Opening of an exhibition in "The Sixth Line" Gallery

MAY

The police were out in force at the "Maladzechna-98" music festival. A group of Young Front members were escorted from the spectators' area by police officers, who initially charged five of the group and subsequently all of Young Front members with offences. The essence of the offence was that the boys held white balloons with "NRM"¹ written on them with a red marker. The famous singer Kasia Kamotskaya, a special guest of the festival, was not allowed to perform.

11 DECEMBER

Minsk-based rock bands NRM, Ulis, and Novaye Neba were not allowed to perform in the Harodnya movie theatre Kosmas. After a telephone call from the City Executive Committee the theatre administration refused to supply power for the equipment.

¹ The name of a popular Belarusian-language rock band — PK.

1999

FEBRUARY

Zoya Vrublewskaia, editor in charge of musical programmes on Belarusian radio, banned the groups Paganini, Skryabin, and Stravinski from the air, judging their music to be "devilish."

5 MARCH

A scheduled performance in Berastsye by the band NRM was cancelled after the club received a telephone call from the City Executive Committee. The organisers tried to re-stage the show in a cinema, but this failed when the police sealed off the building.



A group of artists at "The Sixth Line" Gallery

5 MAY

Navapolatsk city authorities closed a discotheque run by members of the local branch of Young Front. The establishment offered records and live music in the Belarusian language.

JUNE

The Minsk City Executive Committee banned the editorial board of the newspaper "Belarusian Youth" to stage the annual rock concert dedicated to the Belarusian traditional holiday Kupalle. For the previous five years the concerts *Kupalle with the Belarusian Youth* had been held in Gorky Park in downtown Minsk. The first efforts at disrupting the event occurred as early as in 1995 when the city authorities cut off electricity to the stage.

21 JULY

On the last day of Aleksander Lukashenka's first term as president, the artist Ales Pushkin pushed a cart full of manure containing a festive portrait of Lukashenka, a 1996 referendum poster saying "Requesting Your Support," the reinstalled Soviet-style Belarusian national symbols, new bank notes, handcuffs and chains and dumped it front of the main entrance to the presidential administration building. Pushkin told journalists that the entire performance had been conceived as a work entitled '*A Thank-You to the FPRB² for His Five Years of Feverishly Hard and Fruitful Work for the People*'. The following November a court in Minsk found Ales Pushkin guilty of hooliganism and disrespect to state symbols and sentenced him to two years in prison (suspended).

28 JULY

The organisers of the "Youth For Belarus" concert were refused permission to stage the event in the 50th Anniversary of the October Revolution Park in Minsk.³ On 19 June the Minsk City Executive Committee did not grant permission to hold a "Youth against Fascism" meeting and concert on the square in front of the opera house, and repeated the refusal on 11 July. Maladzechna officials refused to issue a permit for a meeting and concert on 27 July dedicated to Independence Day. A concert planned for 1 August in Minsk was also not permitted.

27 AUGUST

During a "Youth for Belarus" concert, organised by the Belarusian Musical Alternative (BMA) in Maladzechna, the police detained 30 people including BMA head Vital Supranovich. Some of the detained were fined for "violating public order during the concert." The lead singer of Happy Face was fined for speaking about Lukashenka's dictatorship from the stage.

8 SEPTEMBER

During the international performance festival "Navinki-99,"⁴ the director of the Palace of Arts in Minsk demanded the "Zhest" theatre stop their performance (a Belarusian interpretation of the Japanese *butoh* dance), because he found it obscene. The director expelled the audience from the Palace and closed the festival. Due to the efforts on the part of the organisers, the festival managed to reopen.

DECEMBER

Ivan Kakhanovich, editor of the youth board of Belarusian state-owned Radio 1, told the DJs and authors of the programme "Na Wsyu Mots" (Full Force), which promoted Belarusian-language rock,

² Supposedly meaning «First President of the Republic of Belarus» — PK.

³ Just to make it clear: the park was planted to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the 1917 Socialist revolution. The revolution began on November 7, which date is still celebrated by some people in the 3rd millennium. However, according to the Russian Orthodox calendar that was then used in Russia, the revolution began on

October 25, and therefore Communist ideology idolised The Great October, even after having dismissed the old style calendar. Hence the name of the park built 50 years later — PK.

⁴ Although literally meaning "novelties" or "small news", the word Navinki is commonly known as the name of the village where the Minsk regional mental asylum is situated.

that the station's director Mr. Yadrantsaw ordered the programme be taken off the air.

2000

FEBRUARY

World-famous writer Vasil Bykau left Belarus for Germany. His departure was motivated by the campaign of persecution conducted against him by the authorities through state-owned media.

MARCH

The Minsk authorities banned the 25 March "Pahonya" exhibition in the Palace of Arts (see above).

MARCH

The Berastsye City Executive Committee banned the "Mummification's Day" festival that was being organised by the New Front of Arts and planned for 5-6 March in a city club.

MARCH

Leanid Halubovich's selection of poems titled 'Last Poems' was published as part of the 'Library of Kalosye Magazine' series. All state-run publishers refused to publish the book due to the oppositional content of some poems.

17 MARCH

An installation by Ales Karpovich and Piotr Rusak entitled 'Spring-2000' disappeared from the "Pahonya" exposition in the Palace of Arts in Minsk. Despite all attempts it was never found. The missing work of art represented an image resembling the head of the Belarusian state.

MAY

During the "Minsk Spring" International Festival, the City Executive Committee banned Belarusian and Polish performers from playing in front of the "Dze-ya" theatre. The authorities equated these artistic actions to unauthorised rallies. The police detained some journalists who photographed the event as it was being broken up. The authorities did not allow a press conference to be held after the festival and threatened to close the "Reactor" club that hosted rock bands as the name of one of the Polish bands was "Pidzama Porno" and the club did not have a licence for male strip-tease.

16 MAY

The administration of the Talochyn district in the Vitsebsk region ordered Ales Pushkin's paintings to be removed from the district alleging that his art had a negative influence on the people's national identity. The paintings were exhibited in Talochyn's House of Culture and the exhibition (attended by young people from the neighbourhood) was visited by the artist himself who staged a performance.

MAY

The Minsk City Executive Committee denied the youth wing of the Belarusian Social Democratic Party "Popular Gromada" authorisation to hold a reading of traditional poetry at Kupaly Square in downtown Minsk. The authorities suggested the event move to an uptown location.

31 MAY

The Minsk Pershamayski District Court heard the case filed by TV journalist Yaraslaw Byaklemishaw against Belarusian TV and Radio. The former host of a cultural programme directed to youth believed that he had been unjustly fired. One of Byaklemishaw's programmes had featured Yury Khashchevatski, which became the reason for the journalist's dismissal on the grounds of "severely violating the order of preparing and broadcasting a television programme."

1 JULY

The Minister of Culture sent a letter to the director of the National Theatre of Belarusian Drama stating that the ministry found it inappropriate to prolong a contract with V. Y. Mazynski, the theatre's art director since its founding. The theatre, once called "Volnaya Stsena" (Free Stage), lost its freedom-associated name due to actions by the ministry. Mazynski had previously had problems with the ministry involving 'The Career of Arthur VI' by Bertold Brecht. Perhaps, the cause for Mazynski's dismissal was his staging of 'Prince Mamabuk' by Belarusian playwright Dudaraw — a play in which the officials see allusions to president Lukashenka.

SEPTEMBER

The Minister of Culture appoints Valery Anisenka Art Director of the National Theatre of Belarusian Drama to replace Valery Mazynski. Most of the troop had left together with Mazynski. The theatre began to recruit, under the threat of expulsion, students of the Culture University's Directing Department headed by Anisenka.

23 SEPTEMBER

The Harodnya City Executive Committee banned the first graffiti festival in the Park of Culture and Recreation. The festival was expected to attract 300 young people and special boards were specifically prepared for the event.

OCTOBER

Despite a request from the German Embassy, the Culture Department of the Harodnya City Executive Committee banned the "The Invisible Wall 2000" International Bard Festival on the pretext that Harodnya "has planned a sufficient number of cultural events for this period." In the judgement of the festival organisers, the true reason for the ban was that the festival was planned before the election to Lukashenka's House of Representatives and thus was seen as a "suspicious political action." Nevertheless, the festival was held, without authorisation, in the *Kirche* that belonged to Harodnya's Lutheran community.

OCTOBER

During the exhibition of Uladzimir Bazan's photographs entitled *'The Vitsebsk Courier — the Chronicles of a Newspaper Column,'* the Vitsebsk Regional Museum removed some of the photographs without the author's consent. The museum administration explained that the these photographs did not fall in line with the policy of the museum as a state institution. The discarded photographs pictured opposition activists, rallies and protest actions.



Ihar Tsishin, the "Little Partisan Movement" project

3 NOVEMBER

Students of the Belarusian Academy of Arts held a picket outside the academy building under the banner "Student. Artist. Pauper." Their fliers stated that the academy administration eliminated its world-famous graphics chamber for its lack of materials and conditions for students to work. The picket had not been authorised by the Minsk City Executive Committee although the organisers had filed their application in advance as required. The police filmed the protesters with a video camera. Henadz Rudovich, deputy head of the Interior Department for the Pershamayski District, warned that those participating in the picket would face administrative charges.

2001

1 FEBRUARY

During a conference entitled "Measures to Solve Problems connected with the Development of Culture and Art," Alaksandar Lukashenka ordered a National Chamber of Creative Workers be established in the House of Writers. Earlier, on 1 July 1997 the president had ordered the House to be placed under the control of the Office of Presidential Affairs "in order to ensure the efficient utilisation of state property," despite the fact that it was built with the private funds of the writers and was the property of the Union of Writers. The actual reason, according to Lukashenka himself, was that the building, constructed with state funds, hosted opposition meetings. The Union of

Writers believes that the new Chamber of Creative Workers is an instrument to irreversibly take away the property of the Union.

FEBRUARY

Lukashenka issued the edict "On the National Council of Rectors of Higher Educational Establishments," a body made up of assigned rectors of state-owned universities and similar institutions. Under the edict rectors may "initiate and co-ordinate licensing, reorganisation and liquidation of higher educational establishments," change their names and statuses and introduce new subjects. The edict's text did not mention whether the council would also include rectors of private establishments.

FEBRUARY

The State Committee for Youth Affairs, the founder of the Belarusian-language magazine "Pershatvet" (Primrose), decided to cease its publication. The official explanation was that the magazine was not generating a sufficient profit. "Pershatvet," the only state-run publication for young authors writing in Belarusian, was transformed into the Russian-language magazine "STO."

19 MARCH

The Board of the Harodnya City Branch of the Belarusian Union of Artists banned Yuras Matsko's exhibition "Dzyady" by a majority of votes. The opening of the local sculptor's exhibition had been planned for 23 March. The ban was initiated by Iryna Pratsko, director of the Union's exhibition hall in Harodnya, who justified the decision by claiming that a nationalist exhibition would "threaten public order." The actual reason for the refusal was not to let the opening coincide with an anniversary of the Belarusian Popular Republic, as the author mentioned his intention to invite opposition representatives to the event.

This monitoring of the violation of creative and academic freedoms is based on information collected from:

- a) Belarusian and foreign media;
- b) Belarusian non-governmental organisations;
- c) witnesses and other people.

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