



OFFICE FOR A  
DEMOCRATIC BELARUS  
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## Belarus Headlines

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### Economics

#### Belarus President Visits Azerbaijan



Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko made his first official visit to Azerbaijan on Wednesday,

bringing together the leaders of two countries seeking to lessen their energy dependence on Russia. Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev said his country is seeking to diversify ways to bring its Caspian Sea oil to Western markets and supports a plan to pump oil across Ukraine and into Poland via the Odessa-Brody pipeline, a route that would bypass Russia.

"We have given our political support for this project, and now commercial issues are being discussed," Aliyev said at a news conference with Lukashenko. Belarus borders Ukraine, and Lukashenko has expressed interest receiving oil through the pipeline.

Aliyev held out the prospect of energy supplies to Belarus, saying that Belarusian companies were interested in participating in oil and gas projects in Azerbaijan and that talks would be held in a bid to flesh out cooperation plans. When Aliyev visited Belarus late last year, Lukashenko expressed interest in a share in the development of Azerbaijan's Caspian Sea oil and gas resources.

Azerbaijan will produce 300 million barrels of oil this year and 350 million barrels next year, Aliyev said Wednesday.

In a dig at Russia, which he has accused of using energy as a political lever against him, Lukashenko said he was certain that cooperation with Azerbaijan "will not prompt any political pressure or political consequences, as often happens with other countries."

02/05/2007

Source: The Associated Press

#### Belarus Finalizes Drafts of Nine Agreements with Jakarta

Indonesia and Belarus have finalized the drafts of six new agreements, namely on visa-free privileges for diplomatic and official passport holders, culture, trade information, sciences and technology, political consultations and legal cooperation, during a meeting held in Belarus late last month, the Indonesian Foreign Ministry said on Thursday.

Earlier, in 2004, the two countries also completed the drafts of three agreements, namely on investment protection, technical cooperation protocol and taxation, the ministry said. The two countries were expected to sign all the new two-party agreements late this year when Belarus President Alexander Lukashenko and Foreign Minister Sergei Martynov visit Indonesia, the ministry said.

It said both the Indonesian and Belarus delegations to the April 2007 meeting expressed confidence that the signing of the nine agreements would enhance mutually beneficial relations between the two countries.

03/05/07

Source: ANTARA news

#### Belarusian State Petrochemical Industry Concern Plans to Invest Money in Establishment of its Distributor in Turkey.



The Belarusian Belnaf-takhim plans to invest \$210,000 in the establishment of its distributor in

Turkey. The money will be provided by the Belarusian Petroleum Trading House, a Belnaftakhim subsidiary, according to official information sources.

The yet-to-be-established company is expected to distribute polyester and acrylic

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## Economics

fibre and cord fabrics in Turkey.

Belnaftakhim reportedly believes that the establishment of distribution networks abroad will help increase exports and remove intermediaries from foreign trade, as well as conduct a single trade policy in the external market.

The Belarusian Petroleum Trading House also plans to set up distribution companies in Lithuania, Germany, the Netherlands and Poland this year.

08/05/2007

Source: BelaPAN

### Belarus Confirms Beltransgaz to Be Given to Russia by June 1



Gazprom" OJSC and "Beltransgaz" OJSC are to set up a joint venture by 1 June 2007, First Deputy Prime Minister Uladzimir Syamashka reported to the journalists. The joint venture is

to be set up by 1 June. "Today I had a phone discussion of the latest issues on establishing the joint venture with Aleksei Miller", V.Syamashka said. He remarked that if in February the Russian and Belarusian parties had 31 items of discrepancies, yesterday only 2.5 issues remained.

"Today another problematic item was removed and tomorrow we are going to settle all the remaining problems", V.Syamashka said. He informed that by the end of May the parties are to fix the date of signing the contract of sale of the "Beltransgaz" shares.

What concerns the schedule of selling 50% of "Beltransgaz" shares, as V.Syamashka previously reported, USD 2.5 billion is to be paid in equal parts over the period of 4 years. "For Gazprom to start possessing 12.5% shares since 1 June 2007 it is to transfer USD 625 billion to the budget of Belarus by 20 May. After that it will have possessed 12.5% of Beltransgaz for a year. Then if Gazprom pays another USD 625 billion it will possess 25% of the company, etc", he explained.

Thus, if Gazprom pays a total amount of USD 2.5 billion by 1 June 2010 it will possess 50 % of the Beltransgaz shares.

10/05/2007

Source: Charter'97

### Belarus to Develop Iranian Oilfield

National Iranian Oil Company has approved a general plan that was submitted by Belarus for the joint development of Iran's Jofeyr oilfield.

A source at Belarusanfta, Belarus's state oil company, made the announcement in an interview with the Russian Interfax, the Iranian Shana news agency reported.

The general plan reportedly includes a paragraph about the use of Belarusian technologies. NIOC and Belarusanfta are to start holding some talks soon on development of the oilfield. Commenting on this joint venture, deputy managing director of Belarusanfta in geological affairs Valeri Beskopilni said, "Iran has suggested a buy-back mode for execution of the project." "Based on the terms of the deal, NIOC, as the owner of the field, will be in charge of drawing up the economic and engineering plan of the project and the Belarusian company, as the main contractor of the project, will undertake the exploration and production phase in a specific period of time, which is likely to be eight years", he added.

The contractor of the project will be selling the crude oil products to NIOC in return for receiving a dividend", the official noted. Iran and Belarus signed a Memorandum of Understanding in 2006 for expansion of mutual cooperation in the oil sector and now Belarus intends to invest in the said field. Jofeyr oilfield is located in Iran's southern province of Khuzestan and is expected to produce some 30,000 barrels per day of crude oil.

10/05/2007

Source: Press TV

### Foreign Ministry Releases National Report on Export Control, and Military Equipment and Weaponry Exports in 2006

The Belarusian foreign ministry on May 8 unveiled a national report on export control, and military equipment and weaponry exports in 2006. The ministry has compiled such reports since 2002 based on data from governmental agencies engaged in export control system or foreign trade in products for military purposes.

The report contains information about the government's activities in 2006 to regulate the import and export of goods and services for military purposes. In particular, it says that licenses for foreign trade in such goods were issued to 11 organizations last year. Six of those organizations had never had such licenses before. A total of 74 organizations are now licensed to engage in foreign trade in products for military purposes, primarily in products of their own making. As many as 250 licenses for exports and imports were issued during the accounting period.

10/05/2007

Source: BelaPAN

## Politics

### Mass Interrogations of Young Front Members by Belarus KGB

The Belarus State Security Committee (KGB) brings another lawsuit against the Young Front. It says that in Saligorsk the KGB staff officers took two youth activists, Rigor Astapenka and Syargei Tkachuk, from school to the local department for interrogation. Other two activists Maksim Gamitsevich and Zmitser Yafimovich received subpoenas for the interrogations. These lawsuits were brought by captain of the regional KGB Zmitser Svistun who in majority of cases personally interrogated the youth activists and made decisions on bringing criminal lawsuits. It is the same person who ordered to detain the Young Front members and keep

them in the isolation ward in February this year.

According to the press service of the Young Front, the actions of the KGB have resulted in the conclusion that the regime does not intend to stop repressions against the Young Front activists even after the sound court hearing of Zmitser Dashkevich's case and the coming court hearing of cases of the Young Front activists Zmitser Fedaruk, Baris Garetsky, Nasta Palazhanka, Alyaksei Yanusheusky and Aleg Korban who are charged of actions on behalf of the unregistered organization.

04/05/2007

**Source: Eurasian Secret Services  
Daily Review**

### Young Opposition Activist Fined \$435

Dzmitry Fedaruk, a leader of an unregistered opposition youth group called Malady Front (Young Front), was fined 930,000 rubels (\$435) on May 3, his associate, Barys Haretski, told.

A judge of Minsk's Savetski District Court found him guilty of organizing an unsanctioned march during the opposition's Charnobylski Shlyakh (Path of Chernobyl) demonstration on April 26. The 18-year-old Fedaruk was brought to the court from the district police department where he had appeared on summons.

Messrs. Fedaruk and Haretski, as well as Aleh Korban, Anastasiya Palazhanka and Alyaksei Yanushewski are under criminal prosecution on charges of acting on behalf of an unregistered organization under Article 193-1 of the Criminal Code, which carries a fine, a jail term of up to six months or a

prison sentence of up to two years.

On November 1, 2006, Malady Front activist Zmitser Dashkevich was sentenced to 18 months in a minimum-security correctional institution on the same charge.

According to Mr. Haretski, on May 2, Dzmitry was questioned by Dzmitry Svistun, an investigator with the KGB office for Minsk and Minsk region. "As Dzmitry told me, Svistun threatened that if he refused to cooperate, harsh measures of influence would be applied to him," Mr. Haretski said.

04/05/2007

**Source: BelaPAN**

### Belarusian Opposition Leader Meets with Polish President



Alyaksandr Milinkevich, chairman of the Belarusian opposition's Political Council of Pro-democratic Forces, met with Polish President Lech Kaczynski in Warsaw on May 4, Belapan reported. "We discussed the role that Poland could play in the democratization of Belarus... I emphasized the need for the Polish ambassador to

return to Belarus, as, in my opinion, this would improve our bilateral relations," Milinkevich said after the meeting. Henryk Litwin, who was appointed Poland's ambassador to Belarus in February 2006, has not yet taken up his duties because of strained diplomatic relations between the two countries. Kaczynski reportedly assured to Milinkevich that Poland will continue its programs providing assistance to Belarusian students expelled from universities and Belarusians expelled from jobs for political reasons.

07/05/2007

**Source: Radio Free Europe**

### Young Opposition Activists Present Greeting Cards, Balloons to World War II Veterans

Several dozens of young opposition activists presented greeting cards and balloons to World War II veterans during festivities in Minsk's Gorky Park on the occasion of the 62nd anniversary of the Soviet Union's victory over Nazi Germany in the 1941-45 Great Patriotic War.

On the previous evening, more than 20 members of the Belarusian Social Democratic Party "Hramada" (BSDP) laid flowers



## Politics

### Young Opposition Activists Present Greeting Cards, Balloons to World War II Veterans ...

at the graves of Soviet WWII soldiers at the Military Cemetery in Minsk. BSDP Deputy Chairman Anatol Sidarevich noted that the party observes the Victory Day on May 8 as all nations of the anti-Hitler coalition.

On May 7, the acting chairman of the party, Anatol Lyawkovich, took part in a flower-laying ceremony at the Brest Fortress Memorial. Belarus, of

pants, which included members of the Belarusian Party of Communists and the Free Trade Union of Belarus, laid 62 scarlet roses and carnations at the Eternal Flame there and observed one minute's silence in memory of the defenders of the fortress.

The ceremony followed a march along Brest's central streets, in which some 50 people took part.

Local opposition activists laid wreaths

at the Eternal Flame on Labor Square in Homel on May 9. According to Vasil Palyakow, chairman of the Homel regional organization of the United Civic Party, about 50 people participated in the ceremony. "Everything passed off well and no one hindered us," Mr. Palyakow told. "But some men were recording our actions on video all the time."

09/05/2007

Source: BelaPAN

### Belarus Expels US Evangelist

The authoritarian-ruled state of Belarus expelled a US humanitarian aid worker because an evangelical Christian group employed him, the Belapan news agency reported on Tuesday. Decker Travis Todd had worked in the Belarusian capital Minsk at a humanitarian aid agency sponsored by the a US-headquartered branch of Protestant church.

Todd was kicked out of the country "for activities directed towards the bringing of harm to the national security of the Republic of Belarus," according to a Minsk police statement.

Belarusian authorities cancelled Todd's visa without grounds, as his activities in the country centred on helping the poor, said Maria Savushkina, a church member.

Belarus authoritarian government in recent months has targeted foreign-financed religious organizations as a potential threat, often claiming the groups are fronts for Western spy agencies.

Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko has repeatedly linked Western aid to groups in Georgia and Ukraine for those two states' pro-democracy Rose and Orange revolutions in the last five years. He has vowed a "coloured revolution" will not take place in Belarus, citing a need "to preserve stability."

15/05/2007

Source: Earthtimes.org

### City Government Allows Opposition Coalition to Hold Its Congress at Minsk Automobile Factory's Culture Palace on May 26, 27



The Minsk City Executive Committee has allowed the opposition to hold its second Congress of Pro-democratic Forces at the Culture Palace of the Minsk Automobile Factory (MAZ) on May 26 and 27.

According to the press office of the United Civic Party (UCP), in a written reply received by UCP Deputy Chairman Ihar Shynkaryk on May 15, Eduard Tamilchik, head of the Committee's organization and legal affairs department, said that the organizers should sign a rent contract with the administration of the Culture Palace and discuss the program of the event and issues concerning public order with the city police department.

The administration of the Culture Palace earlier refused to provide its concert hall for the Congress, explaining that the building would be hosting an art festival of children and youths with disabilities on May 26 and 27 on the occasion of International Child Protection Day.

The organizers also received denials from the administrations of the Minsk Concert Hall, and the Palace of the Republic, which also said that the premises would be occupied on those dates.

"I guess that the MAZ Palace of Culture will now prove vacant because the Presidential Administration appears to have given its consent," Mr. Shynkaryk told BelaPAN. According to him, Alyaksandr Bukhvostaw, chairman of the organizing committee for the Congress, will contact the administration of the Palace on May 16.

15/05/2007

Source: BelaPAN

## Politics

### Czech Senators Say Belarus Must not Enter U.N. Human Rights Council



Czech representatives to the U.N. should actively prevent Belarus from succeeding with its candidacy for U.N. Human Rights Council membership, the Czech Senate commission on support to the Belarusian democratic opposition agreed today.

Vlastimil Sehnal, the commission head, told CTK that he has already discussed the issue with Czech PM Mirek Topolánek (both Civic Democrats, ODS).

"It is important to be united," Sehnal said.

The U.N. Human Rights Council in the past repeatedly condemned the Belarusian regime for violation of fundamental freedoms. It called on the Belarusian government to stop persecuting NGOs, political parties, unions, independent media, religious organisations and people promoting human rights and democracy.

Former Czech president Vaclav Havel, too, recently condemned Belarus' candidacy for membership of the council, which is the U.N.'s main body for human rights protection.

The international community has criticised the authoritarian regime of Belarusian President Alexandr Lukashenko for a long time.

The Czech Republic, like other countries, helps Belarusian dissidents and it has admitted for university studies several dozens of Belarusian students persecuted by the regime at home.

The Czech Senate commission wants to address Czech Deputy PM Alexandr Vondra (ODS) and Foreign Minister Karel Schwarzenberg (for the Greens) to discuss the possible lifting of the Czech visa fee from Belarusian students, Sehnal said.

16/05/2007

Source: Prague Daily Monitor

### Organizer of Opposition's Chernobyl Anniversary March Arrested in Minsk

Yury Zyankovich, one of the organizers of the opposition's April 26 Charnobylski Shlyakh demonstration, was arrested and charged with a minor civil offence on May 16.

The charge against member of the Belarusian Popular Front dates back to the last month's authorized demonstration and is based on testimony by a road police officer who said that the crowd had left the sidewalk and entered the roadway while moving along Surhanava Street, obstructing traffic, Mr. Zyankovich, told.

"I explained to police officers at the Savetski district police department that I had called on the demonstrators to walk on the sidewalk," he added.

The Minsk City Court has yet to hear Mr. Zyankovich's complaint about the city authorities' decision to ban Charnobylski Shlyakh participants from marching along the Independence Avenue to the National Library, a route originally planned by the organizers of the annual demonstration.



The organizers of the march initially wanted it to start on the Yakub Kolas Square at 6 p.m. and walk on sidewalks along Minsk's main avenue to the square in front of the National Library, where a rally would begin at 8 o'clock.

The city government rejected the route, suggesting that the march should start on the square in front of the National Academy of Sciences and run on sidewalks along Surhanava Street to Peoples' Friendship Park near Bangalore Square.

16/05/2007

Source: Charter'97

### Milinkevich to Take Floor at the Congress of Democratic Forces

Chairman of the Political Council of Democratic Forces of Belarus Alyaksandr Milinkevich announced yesterday in the evening that he was certainly to take the floor at the Congress of Democratic Forces that is to be held 26-27 May in Minsk. A. Milinkevich, who is presently in London on the invitation of the Foreign Office of Great Britain, disapproved the information about him ignoring the Congress. "I shall participate in the Congress. I will certainly express my viewpoint on the situation. But I consider it to be a great step back if the Congress is not going to elect a Chairman of the Political Council. I have always been insisting that this fact is very important for demonstration of our unity and for influencing the public. If we are going to fight the dictatorship with the round table that is not clear to the public, I will not apply for co-chairmanship, but I will participate in the Congress".

16/05/2007 Source: Svaboda.org

## EU and Belarus

### Belarusian Journalist Receives Lorenzo Natali Prize

The editor of the Belarusian independent electronic newspaper <http://www.nn.by>, Andrej Dynko, is winner of the Lorenzo Natali prize for 2006. This is an international prize for journalists from all over the world who write articles on democracy promotion and human rights struggle. Mr. Dynko has become the first journalist from the central Europe to get it. Andrej Dynko was nominated to this award for his "Prison Diary", which he wrote in jail in March 2006. The article was published in the Belarusian independent newspaper "Nasha Niva" even before the author was released; later, it was translated into 8 languages and published in international press.

In 2006, there were more than 1529 applications from 165 countries all over the world for the Lorenzo Natali Prize.

In order to define winners, the jury goes through 3 stages of decision-making. During the first one, every paper is read by students (this time the students of high school of journalism in Berlin) who select 50 best works. After that, the selected articles are considered by a special jury consisting of professional journalists from five continents and professors of journalism and human rights defenders. This year the jury was chaired by one of the well-known CNN presenters, Femi Oke.

The awarding ceremony of the Lorenzo Natali Prize

2006 took place on Thursday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, in Brussels and gathered together 15 the prize winners, various human rights defenders, journalists, the jury members and guest of the event.

The prize winners are:

Massoud Ansari (Pakistan), Mohammad Ben Hussein (Jordanian), Maria Paz Cuevas (Chile), **Andrej Dynko (Biélarus)**, Talal El-Atrache (Syria), Tanya Farber (South Africa), Lucky George (Nigeria), Syed Shoaib Hassan (Pakistan), Mario Kaiser (Deutschland), Mauri Konig (Brasil), Siew Ying Leu (China), Robert Mugagga (Ouganda), Maria Teresa Ronderos Torres (Colombia), Michael Tierney (Scotland), Aijaz ZakaSyed (India).

Andrej Dynko got the second prize in the European region for his "Prison Diary". It is his 4<sup>th</sup> international award. When receiving the prize, Mr. Dynko said: "There is a kind of irony in my imprisonment experience. The building where I spent my term has been constructed with the sponsorship of the TACIS program. And now I am here, in the Commission premises, getting the EU prize. It was cold there, in prison, smoky and noisy. We were 9 people with only 5 beds to share. I was able to write during nights. I am glad that readers understood what Belarusians are going through".



### PACE Committee: Belarus Does not Belong to the UN Human Rights Council

Strasbourg, 14.05.2007 – The presentation of Belarus as an unopposed candidate for the UN Human Rights Council is "nothing less than scandalous" given Belarus' dismal human rights record, according to a statement approved today by the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly (PACE).

In its statement, the committee urges the UN General Assembly to reject Belarus' candidacy and calls on the Assembly's regional groups to abandon the tactic of "clean slates" – where only as many candidates are presented as there are seats to be filled – thus ensuring a genuine choice in the election.

Belarus is the only European country which is not a member of the Council of Europe.

The election of new members to the UN Human Rights Council is scheduled for 17 May 2007.

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14/05/2007

Source: Coe.int