

## 46<sup>th</sup> session of the UN Human Rights Council

### Oral Statement

#### ITEM 2: Enhanced Interactive Dialogue on the High Commissioner's report on Belarus

Thank you Madam President,

The Right Livelihood Foundation and Right Livelihood Laureate "Viasna" welcome the report of the High Commissioner, which reveals the extent of the human rights violations committed by Belarus. We condemn its refusal to grant access to the OHCHR and praise the courage of all the internal observers who reported on the faulty elections, at great personal risk, and provided information on the subsequent violent crackdown.

Viasna played a crucial role in documenting such facts. As a consequence, its members have suffered severe reprisals. Marfa Rabkova, Andrei Chapiuk, Tatiana Lasitsa and Leonid Sudalenka were all arrested and remain in detention for their commitment to human rights, including observing peaceful assemblies and documenting evidence of torture of detained protesters.

We are deeply concerned by the recent intensification of repressions. On February 16, the authorities carried out mass raids and intimidation against human rights organisations and journalists, including Viasna's offices and the house of its founder Ales Bialiatski.

Madam President,

We call upon the Human Rights Council to stand by Belarusian people in their struggle for democracy and Human Rights, and to urge the authorities to uphold their obligations. Full accountability must be provided and continued scrutiny by the Council is crucial.

We also urge Belarus to implement the recommendations of the report, immediately and unconditionally release all those detained in connection with the protests, including Viasna's activists, and drop all charges against them.

Thank you.