



EUROPEAN UNION

DELEGATION TO THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS

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Dear Ms. Tonkacheva and Mr. Bialiatski,

Thank you for your letter dated 15 April 2015 in which you draw our attention to the worsening situation of political prisoner Mikalay Statkevich. Thanks to cooperation with human rights organizations like Lawtrend and Viasna, as well as frequent contacts with families of political prisoners, the EU Delegation is well aware of the pressure exerted on Mr. Statkevich, and constantly raises this issue in all contacts with Belarusian authorities.

As you already know, the EU Delegation's attempt to monitor the trial of Mr. Statkevich on 4 May 2015 was unsuccessful, despite our efforts. Following his sentencing, the European External Action Service Spokesperson issued a statement, which is attached below.

We regret to inform you that we have received negative replies to all our requests to visit political prisoners in captivity, but have continued to advise the authorities that visits of, for example, Red Cross representatives, would be beneficial.

Taking this opportunity we wish to stress that the release of political prisoners remains a precondition for normalization of relations between the European Union and Belarus.

Thank you again for keeping us informed on this important matter.

Sincerely yours,

Maira Mora