

119TH CONGRESS
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H. RES. 73

Condemning the fraudulent January 2025 Belarusian presidential election and the Lukashenka regime's continued autocratic rule, calling for continued support for the people of Belarus who seek a democratic future, and calling for free and fair elections in Belarus in line with international standards.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 28, 2025

Mr. KEATING (for himself, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Ms. KAPTUR, and Mr. SMITH of New Jersey) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

RESOLUTION

Condemning the fraudulent January 2025 Belarusian presidential election and the Lukashenka regime's continued autocratic rule, calling for continued support for the people of Belarus who seek a democratic future, and calling for free and fair elections in Belarus in line with international standards.

Whereas, on January 26, 2025, the Lukashenka regime administered fraudulent presidential elections with Alyaksandr Lukashenka's illegal manipulation of the vote totals and repression of the opposition ensuring his continued corrupt rule of Belarus;

Whereas, the January 26, 2025, fraudulent elections did not reflect the will of the Belarusian people who seek a free and democratic future;

Whereas Alyaksandr Lukashenka has ruled Belarus for more than 30 years and has consolidated his authoritarian rule through attacks on civil society, fraudulent elections, and repression of any semblance of opposition to his rule;

Whereas Lukashenka and his cronies have greatly intensified their abhorrent crackdown on civil society including following the fraudulent 2020 presidential elections, and the regime now holds more than 1,200 political prisoners including peaceful protesters, journalists, and business leaders;

Whereas the Lukashenka regime has been credibly accused of torture, harassment, and violence against political prisoners forcing unlawfully detained individuals to sleep in damp cells, depriving them of family visits and outside contact, and regularly abusing and humiliating prisoners;

Whereas the United States, the European Union, and numerous friends of Belarus have called for the immediate release of all political prisoners in Belarus;

Whereas the Belarusian regime has actively participated in Russia's war of aggression in Ukraine, providing a staging ground for Russian ground forces as well as air and missile attacks on Ukrainian civilian infrastructure;

Whereas public reporting has shown that, at the direction and coordination of the Belarusian and Russian Governments, more than 2,400 children have been transported from Russian-occupied regions of Ukraine to facilities in Belarus where abducted children are forced to undergo

political and cultural reeducation as well as military training to serve the interests of Belarus and Russia;

Whereas Lukashenka has said his country is hosting dozens of Russian nuclear weapons which threatens global security and increases the risks of escalation;

Whereas, in addition to the fraudulent January 2025 elections, previous presidential elections on August 9, 2020, as well as parliamentary elections on February 25, 2024, have been deemed fraudulent and lacked any international observers from reputable organizations;

Whereas, in response to opposition candidates garnering significant support both in the lead-up to and in the aftermath of the 2020 presidential election, the regime cracked down imprisoning thousands and arresting opposition figures like Siarhei Tsikhanouski and Maria Kalesnikava, as well as forcing countless others into exile;

Whereas Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty affiliated journalists Andrey Kuznechyk and Ihar Losik as well as former Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty journalist Ihar Karney remain wrongfully imprisoned in Belarus and have been recognized by international human rights organizations as political prisoners;

Whereas, in direct response to the fraudulent August 9, 2020, Belarusian presidential elections, the United States has initiated a Strategic Dialogue with the Belarusian democratic movement and civil society to increase the advocacy of Belarusians, support civil society, independent media, and the Belarusian people amid the regime's ongoing crackdown, and coordinate accountability mechanisms for the Lukashenka regime;

Whereas the United States has imposed sanctions on hundreds of Belarusian individuals and entities which enable the regime's repression of the Belarusian people as well as numerous visa restrictions against regime officials and affiliates for their ongoing undermining of democracy in Belarus;

Whereas European national governments and the European Union as well as other allies and partners have imposed sanctions against the Lukashenka regime for its abhorrent crackdown on political prisoners, its facilitation of the abduction of thousands of Ukrainian children, and its participation in Russia's war of aggression against a sovereign Ukraine;

Whereas the United States has provided more than \$140,000,000 in assistance to Belarus since the 2020 fraudulent presidential elections to further the strong partnership between the people of Belarus who support democracy and rule of law and the United States;

Whereas the United States has committed to regular dialogue with the Belarusian democratic opposition; and

Whereas the Belarusian people are tireless and dedicated advocates for their freedom amid an intense environment of repression which exists inside of Belarus and the regime's efforts to silence Belarusians who live in exile around the world: Now, therefore, be it

- 1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—
- 2 (1) strongly condemns the fraudulent
- 3 Belarusian presidential elections on January 26,
- 4 2025, which were neither free nor fair, and the
- 5 Lukashenka regime's continued repression and

1 crackdown against the Belarusian democratic oppo-
2 sition;

3 (2) calls on the regime to hold free and fair
4 elections with credible international monitoring
5 mechanisms to ensure the voices of the Belarusian
6 people are accurately heard;

7 (3) condemns the Lukashenka regime's contin-
8 ued support for Russia's illegal war of aggression
9 against Ukraine as well as the regime's complicity in
10 the forcible transfer of Ukrainian children from
11 Ukraine and the use of Belarusian territory as a
12 staging ground for Russian armed forces attacks
13 against Ukraine;

14 (4) supports additional sanctions against the
15 Lukashenka regime and officials who undermine de-
16 mocracy in Belarus or are complicit in Russia's war
17 of aggression against Ukraine including judges, po-
18 lice officials, and state-owned businesses that profit
19 on the regime's repression;

20 (5) calls for continued support to the
21 Belarusian democratic opposition as well as regular
22 meetings of the Strategic Dialogue between the
23 United States and the Belarusian democratic opposi-
24 tion to demonstrate the United States support for
25 and solidarity with the opposition and as an avenue

1 for pursuing creative solutions to continue to hold
2 the Lukashenka regime accountable for its repres-
3 sion;

4 (6) calls on the Lukashenka regime to imme-
5 diately release the more than 1,200 political pris-
6 oners who remain behind bars in Belarus;

7 (7) supports allied and partner governments ef-
8 forts including sanctions, visa restrictions, and bilat-
9 eral dialogue mechanisms to hold the Lukashenka
10 regime accountable and support the democratic op-
11 position; and

12 (8) stands with the Belarusian people as they
13 pursue a democratic future free from authoritarian
14 repression.

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