

Political Repressions in Belarus Continue Despite Talks of Democratization



A story so outrageous and so boringly usual for Belarus: Ihar Slučak, a political activist, is being threatened by police because of his intentions to participate in local elections scheduled for April.

The [Belarusian State University](#) expells Taciana Šapučka, a member of the opposition organization [Malady Front](#), after she had visited a conference organized by the European Commission in Brussel (see a story [here](#)).

Human Rights Watch has issued its new report ([see p. 384](#)) naming current political prisoners in Belarus: Mikalaj Aŭtuchovič, Uladzimir Asipienka, business people; and [Arciom Dubski](#), another activist of Malady Front.

As it seems, an evolution of the Belarusian regime towards democracy, so much talked about in 2009, mostly still remains theory. Sadly, repressions against the opposition were and remain an instrument to run the country despite the government's closer ties with the EU.

Homel-based young activist Ihar Sluchak, who studies in Estonia, during his holidays in Belarus faces pressure of the authorities.

As informed by Radio Svaboda, Ihar Sluchak is set to participate in local elections in spring.

On January 18 in the evening the student of Tartu University Ihar Sluchak received a phone call from a lieutenant of the

first city police department Illya Kruk. As said by Ihar Sluchak, the policeman was swaying him to come, but flatly refused to invite him by summons. A call from the police department was made after the statement by Sluchak about actions of policemen or internal troops during one of hockey games in Homel.

The young activist refused to talk without receiving a summons. In 5 minutes the head of the internal affairs department of Central district of Homel, major Shyshkou, and demanded Sluchak to arrive to the police department without a summons on January 19 at 10 a.m., and stated that Sluchak had made a mistake by sending his appeal. He also threatened to initiate a case for disobedience to demands of a policeman.

Read the full story at Spring96.org

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The Internet, Free Expression, and Authoritarianism

Tuesday, November 17th 2009, 2pm-5pm

Location: Georgetown University's Institute for the Study of Diplomacy and the Mortara Center for International Studies (3601 N. St. NW)

Evgeny Morozov, Andrew Carvin, Arvind Ganesan, Shanthi Kalathil, and Marc Lynch will discuss the evolving nature of authoritarianism in the age of social media and digital communications. The speakers will assess the impact of new

communication technology on regime stability, free expression and civic engagement, and discuss the changing political environments in Russia, China, and Iran.

Session I: 2:00 PM □ 3:00 PM

Evgeny Morozov

Yahoo! Fellow at Georgetown University

Session II: 3:30 □ 5:00 PM

Andrew Carvin

Senior Strategist, Social Media Desk, National Public Radio

Arvind Ganesan

Director of Business and Human Rights, Human Rights Watch

Shanthi Kalathil

Co-author, *Open Networks, Closed Regimes: The Impact of the Internet on Authoritarian Rule*

Marc Lynch

Professor, The George Washington University

This program is sponsored by the Institute for the Study of Diplomacy and the Mortara Center for International Studies at Georgetown University, with the generous support of the Schott Foundation and Yahoo!

This event requires a ticket or RSVP