

UK announces €500k funding to help gather evidence of human rights violations in Belarus

A new programme to collect, store and build evidence of human rights violations and torture against the Belarusian people is being launched today, supported by UK Foreign Office Minister Wendy Morton and our international partners.

The UK is contributing €500k to the 'International Accountability Platform' which will collect and store evidence of human rights violations and torture, which may in future be used in independent criminal proceedings.

It is a joint initiative led by a coalition of expert NGOs and supported by the UK, Denmark, Germany and other international partners to hold Lukashenko's regime to account for systematic human rights violations following the rigged Presidential election in 2020.

Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab said:

The UK stands in solidarity with the victims of systematic human rights violations in Belarus and is committed to ensuring those responsible are held to account.

This independent initiative, free from political interference, will help defend democracy, media freedom and human rights. It will help the Belarusian people take a vital step further towards securing justice.

FCDO Minister for the European Neighbourhood, Wendy Morton, said:

The UK will not stand by as the Lukashenko regime suppresses the Belarusian people through fear, violence and torture.

By working with the international community to gather evidence, this Platform will help to fill a gap to ensure that those who have committed human rights abuses against peaceful protesters, journalists and human rights defenders can ultimately be held to account for their despicable actions.

Victims who want to take part can contact the Platform via its webpage to submit testimony, information and documentation for confidential processing and storage. The Platform will be located at DIGNITY's headquarters in Copenhagen and managed by human rights experts, doctors, lawyers and IT security experts.

The creation of this Platform helps deliver recommendations set out by an independent human rights rapporteur in a report following an investigation into electoral fraud and human rights violations in Belarus.

This report, issued after the UK and 16 of its international partners invoked the Moscow Mechanism at the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), confirmed that August's Presidential election was "falsified" and exposed the full extent of human rights violations committed by Lukashenko's regime against the Belarusian people.

Notes: The UK will continue to work with international allies to defend democracy, media freedom and human rights in Belarus. The UK calls on the government of Belarus to hold new presidential elections, immediately end its campaign of violence and repression, release all those unjustly detained and ensure independent investigations of allegations of torture.