

## Human Rights Violations in Belarus 19/08-25/08/2008

### 19.08

► The Supreme Court of Belarus on Friday upheld the justice ministry's decision to deny state registration to an association called **Haryzantal**. The ministry explained that the association had failed to show its structure in a graphical form and provide for the formalization of its membership, Alena Skryhan, secretary of the Central Committee of the opposition Belarusian Party of Communists (BPC) who is a member of the association's council, told BelaPAN.

A founding conference for Haryzantal was held in Minsk on January 20. Haryzantal is supposed to contribute to the development of civil society and support projects aimed at “implementing the principles of patriotism, social justice, equality and grass-roots democracy” and “strengthening and developing patriotic and democratic traditions and achievements of the Belarusian people.”

► Members of **Union of Poles** in Belarus were detained at border .A representative of the Union of Poles in Belarus Ines Todryk told: “For 3 hours I and the head of Hrodna branch of the Union of Poles in Belarus Myachyslau Yaskevich are kept at the border, and we cannot go to Poland”. Over this time Belarusian customs officers were simply keeping their passports without saying nothing, and then personal search started. Besides, they were ordered to fill in bills, though now private persons are not required to do so.

Ines Todryk is the editor-in-chief of the newspaper “Glos z-nad Niemna (In Exile)”.

► The troupe of the “Free Theatre” faces rigorous search by Belarusian customs office twice over the last 24 hours.

As the head of the “Free Theatre” Nikolay Khalezin told to the Charter’97 press-centre, yesterday the troupe was returning to Minsk from a theatrical festival I Ireland. The actors were traveling from Vilnius. Customs officers meticulously searched all the things of the actors, and property of the theatre. The train was late for an hour because of that.

Today, when actors were traveling in a train to Vilnius, in order to fly to Sweden to a tour, they were searched again. The search lasted for at least an hour. Customs officers demanded to show even things of the theatre worker’s children.

“There is no return to civilization yet, though the regime declares that. We are still living in a country which remains under a total control. Even people of the theatre cannot feel undisturbed. It’s an attempt of psychological pressure. Customs officers and border guards have our names are on a special list. I see no logics in their actions. Theatres do not transport underground literature, even the “Free Theatre”. Such searches... they have never taken place before,” Nikolay Khalezin said.

### 20.08

► Crossing Belarus-Ukrainian border the member of several initiative groups, active participant of the electoral process in Grodno area, the head of Oblast Branch of BNF Sergei Malchik was detained by border guards and custom officers. His things were searched. It happened to times on the way to the Ukraine and on the way back. Officers were interested in things he was bringing

with him. When he asked them about the reason of such interest they didn't give him any answer.

## 21.08

► Apartment of Young Front activist Vadzim Barouski's parents in Dzyatlava was searched. As a signed y v a prosecutor warrant said the search was conducted on the ground of appearing of "Boycott 2008" stickers in the city.

About a hundred of "Boycott 2008" stickers were found during the search. Vadzim's brother Syarhei Barouski was detained and guarded to the militia department to give explanations about stickers in Dzyatlava.

It should be reminded that the "parliamentary election" is to be held in Belarus in autumn 2008. Due to tightening of political repressions in the country, unwillingness of the authorities to liberalise the election law as well as due to the fact that all elections and referendums in Belarus since 1996 have been recognised unfree and non-democratic by international organisations, the civil society and youth organisations of Belarus have decided to boycott the "election".

► In Pinsk criminal investigators carried out searches in apartments of young activists **Vadzim and Makeeu and Dzmitry Badzevich**. The young activists have been studying outside Belarus for more than a year already. That is why, in fact, apartments of their parents were searched. Policemen showed prosecutor's permit for search, however because of a shock parents were not able to remember names of policemen and reasons for investigatory actions.

Ales Krutkin was given a fine of 70 thousand roubles for not coming to the military registration and enlistment office. He was fined guilty in ignoring the subpoena by the judge of Polatsk city court Abramava.

## 24.08

► Youth activists Valzhyna Kisyanovich and Darya Nyapopuch were detained in Rafieva Street in Minsk on 23 August at 9 in the evening when they were spreading information materials about boycott of the "parliamentary election".

Minor girls were guarded to the nearest militia station where they were questioned. Their parents weren't present at the questioning that contradicts the law. Then the girls were guarded to the Maskouski district militia department where they had their fingerprints taken and video taken.

The detained girls were set free after midnight.