

**Human Rights Council - 56th Regular Session – 18 June to 12 July 2024**

**Agenda Item 4 -** *Oral Statement in the Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Belarus*

Thank you, Mister President,

The International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) welcomes the Special Rapporteur’s report on the situation of human rights in Belarus affirming the assessment the ICJ and others that the erosion of human rights protections and the rule of law in the country continues unabated.

We deplore the ongoing attacks on lawyers, including arbitrary detention and spurious prosecutions and disciplinary cases against them often resulting in disbarments, which severely undermine their ability to carry out their professional duties. At least six independent lawyers are being arbitrarily detained and numerous others disbarred by the authorities since the contested presidential elections of 2020.

The ICJ highlights the systematic attacks on civil society, including human rights defenders, NGOs, and trade unions and widespread human rights violations, including the systematic use of torture and ill-treatment against political prisoners, exacerbating the climate of fear and repression in the country.

The ICJ considers it critical that in carrying out her mandate, the Special Rapporteur give particular focus to:

* to the ongoing attacks on lawyers and the broader implications for the administration of justice, ensuring their independence and safety;
* continue monitoring and documenting human rights violations, including allegations of torture and ill-treatment, arbitrary detention, and enforced disappearances, to ensure accountability and bringing perpetrators to justice and providing for effective remedies and reparation for victims and survivors.

I thank you.

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