

## EPP SUPPORTS THE ENGAGEMENT OF THE OPPOSITION IN THE EU-BELARUS DIALOGUE

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Last week, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on the bi-annual evaluation of the EU-Belarus dialogue.

The Secretary-General of the European People's Party (EPP), **Antonio Lopez-Isturiz**, stressed that the EPP has been always promoting its strong support to our partners in Belarus and defending democratic principles, the rule of law and fundamental European values beyond our borders.

*"In the resolution we expressed our concern about the human rights situation; we welcomed the increase of high-level dialogue between the EU and Belarus; and we insisted in the engagement of the opposition in this dialogue, without which it cannot be substantial,"* said MEP Antonio Lopez-Isturiz.

The resolution calls on the government of Belarus to use the next nine months to demonstrate substantial progress in democracy, human rights, rule of law and civil society.

The leader of the EPP observer-member, United Civil Party, Anatol Liabedzka, sees this resolution as homework for the Belarus government. *"We support this homework and also the deadline that was set for it. If it had not been for the strict homework, we would not see any results at all,"* he said.

In the meantime, Mr. Liabedzka stressed that the subject of imprisonment and murder of oppositional politicians is still a major problem that should have been included in the newly adopted resolution.

The EPP also supports EU-Belarus co-cooperation in the framework of the "Eastern Partnership Initiative". The Council included Belarus in its "Eastern Partnership Initiative" that the Commission has launched to step-up cooperation with a number of Eastern European Countries.

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