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Belarus "elections": EPP backs Alaksandar Milinkievič's decision not to stand as Presidential candidate

Brussels, 17 September 2010



The Presidency of the European People's Party (EPP), has announced today that it backs the decision of **Alaksandar Milinkievič** not to stand as a candidate in the forthcoming Presidential elections of 19 December 2010, since the conditions for free and fair elections are not expected to be fulfilled.

"The EPP Presidency is concerned that the Belarusian authorities will again breach international and European democratic standards in these Presidential elections. The EPP, therefore, fully backs the decision of Alaksandar Milinkievič not to stand for these elections because it sends a strong message in Belarus, Europe, and the world," EPP President **Wilfried Martens** underlined.

Here is the full text of the decision of the EPP Presidency:

The EPP Presidency expresses its concern about the prospect of the forthcoming 19 December elections in Belarus again breaching international and European democratic standards.

The EPP expressed their support for democratic pro European opposition forces, attached to the EPP family, in their pursuit of democratic change in Belarus.

The EPP Presidency expressed their regret at the lack of unity of the EPP attached forces (BPF, UCP, MFF) in not proposing a single presidential candidate.

They expressed their support and solidarity with the decision, in the light of the above, of Alaksandar Milinkievič not to stand in presidential elections, if the conditions for free and fair elections are not fulfilled.

Note to editors:

The EPP is the largest and most influential European-level political party of the centre-right, which currently includes 73 member-parties from 39 countries, the Presidents of the Commission, Council, and Parliament, 15 EU and 6 non-EU heads of state and government, 13 members of the European Commission and the largest Group in the European Parliament.

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