



International
Commission
of Jurists



Human Rights
Institute

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in Belarus
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Joint Oral Statement

The International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute and the International Commission of Jurists condemn the ongoing repression of civil society in Belarus, in particular systematic attacks and judicial harassment against lawyers.

We deplore the subordination of the judiciary to the executive, the Ministry of Justice's control over the legal profession, including lawyers' licensing and disciplinary proceedings, and the Bar Association's failure to protect its members. Affected lawyers have no effective remedy left. Since 2020, almost 600 lawyers have been forced out of the profession through arbitrary disbarment, prosecution, or fear of persecution.

We condemn the sentencing of Dzmitry Laevski, a former lawyer who represented, among others, Ales Bialiatski, Viktor Babaryka, and Maksim Znak. On September 9, he was sentenced to three years for interviews in which he discussed their criminal cases.

We denounce the systematic persecution of Belarusians abroad, including trials in absentia, the forced expulsion of released prisoners, the invalidation of their passports, and the denial of consular services.

We urge Belarus to immediately and unconditionally release Dzmitry Laevski, and all those arbitrarily detained, including lawyers and human rights defenders; reinstate arbitrarily disbarred lawyers and guarantee an independent, self-governing legal profession; cease all acts of persecution and reprisals, including those targeting persons abroad; and ensure prompt, thorough, independent and impartial investigations into these violations.

This statement was delivered by:

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