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IMPLEMENTATION OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 60/251 OF 15 MARCH 2006 ENTITLED “HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL”

**Written statement* submitted by Liberal International (LI), a non-governmental
organization in general consultative status**

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is
circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[28 February 2007]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the
submitting non-governmental organization(s).

Human rights situation in Belarus

Liberal International advocates that human and civil rights are inalienable. The treatment of youth regarding to their political rights in Belarus is not acceptable and should be highlighted by the international community. We would like to present observations but the conditions are so dire that these statements represent just a mere glimpse into the situation.

Treatment of young opposition activists

Young leaders within Belarus are being maltreated. There is a constant hunt for youth opposition activists by the KGB, the Belarusian secret service. More than 60 members of various opposition movements were arrested during the weekend of 10-11 February, 2007. Two individuals were detained for 72 hours and charged with organising an illegal political gathering, while it was absolutely clear that their gathering had a peaceful motivation, aimed at addressing the democratic record of the Belarusian government.

Limitations of freedom of speech and expression

There are certain spheres of private life into which no government or institution should intrude in order to limit freedoms of speech or expression. In February 2007, a new obligation was imposed on Belarusian internet cafes that require them to retain logs of websites accessed by their customers for at least 12 months. The state security, law-enforcing and state inspection agencies may access the logs. This demand infringes on the rights and privacy of individuals.

Party registration

The government denies party registration to limit dissident voices. An example can be seen by of the denial of registration to the Union of Left Parties by the Ministry of Justice. The government tries to legitimate its actions by referring to certain legislation or presidential decrees in relation to the struggle against terrorism. People are being denied the freedom of association and expression.

Recommendations

The international community needs to recognize that there is a critical denial of human rights in Belarus. In order for the situation to improve we need to promote, but yet not limit to, three recommendations to the Human Rights Council.

First, the absolutely necessary condition for the improvement of the situation in Belarus is to guarantee the independence of judiciary and the right to a fair trial with all its further implications. Therefore, we would like to ask Special Rapporteur to check, whether there are any steps the international community can make with regards to this problem.

Second, we would like to appeal to the Russian Federation as a member of this honourable body to dedicate more attention to the human rights situation in Belarus. We observe that the situation needs a responsible policy by the Russian Federation towards Belarus.

Third, that the Republic of Belarus becomes a subject of the Universal Periodic Review shortly after the Council develops the modalities and necessary time allocation for this procedure. It will enable all outside observers to keep track of the actual commitment of the Belarusian government to the fulfilment of its international legal obligations.

Working towards democracy

Liberal International calls on international community to look towards the critical denial of human rights in Belarus and work towards providing an improved situation of its citizens and to the young generation.
