

КАНФЕРЭНЦЫЯ
НОВАЯ
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[DRAFT]
**Declaration on Support
for Independent Media**

[New Belarus Conference, August 3-4, 2024]

We, representatives of the democratic forces of Belarus, express our support for the Belarusian independent media, which continue their work under extraordinarily hostile conditions.

The criminal and illegitimate Lukashenka regime targets independent media. Hundreds of journalists have faced political repression for their activities, and dozens remain behind bars. Relatives of exiled journalists and bloggers also face pressure and repression.

Media are denied the opportunity for TV or radio broadcasting in Belarus, as well as for publishing in print. Independent media websites are blocked, while their content and social media pages are labeled as extremist materials. Media are isolated from Belarus' advertising market, and donations from readers are considered a crime and a pretext for persecution for financing extremist activities.

- We emphasize our respect for independent media editorial policies, including their capability to provide a platform for materials and discussions critical of politicians. We acknowledge that this is a natural part of a democratic society.
- We note the need for policy-based and institutional financial aid from international partners for media and bloggers. The work of the media is crucial, and under the current conditions, it cannot be adequately funded through other means.
- We support the aspiration for a diverse information landscape based on democratic values, which is necessary to counter the regime's propaganda and disinformation.
- We stress the critical importance of ensuring the media's access to technological platforms for information dissemination. Modern technologies must help spread free information, not propaganda. Therefore, we call on international technology companies to cooperate with Belarusian independent media.
- We particularly emphasize the importance of maintaining and supporting the Belsat TV channel – a unique Polish aid project, which has allowed millions of Belarusians to have access to uncensored information.