



Doc (27)52

Strasbourg, 1st December 2020

ALDA's statement on the local democracy, human rights and accountability in Belarus

For more than 10 years ALDA has been actively working at grass-roots level in Belarus through different projects targeting local communities. During this period, over 100 grants were offered by ALDA to contribute to local sustainable development, active citizenship and accountability at local level.

With concern, since the elections in August 2020, we are witnessing ever increasing violations of personal freedom, repression and massive arrests of peaceful protesters, human rights defenders, journalists, civil society representatives and activists. Under these circumstances, it is admirable to observe the determination of Belarus people to remain peaceful and not respond to multiple provocations. As a response to these regular abuses, EU states imposed targeted sanctions against Belarus officials responsible for human rights abuses and rigged elections.

As a European organization that actively promotes local democracy, ALDA calls for immediate end of violence actions against peaceful protesters and calls for the beginning of an inclusive national dialogue with the broader society in order to achieve a peaceful resolution of the situation, and also support the requests issued from the European Union Consilium for a new round of free and fair elections as requested by the citizens.

All those detained for exercising their fundamental rights of freedom of assembly and freedom of expression should be immediately released.

ALDA stands ready to **support a peaceful democratic transition** with a variety of instruments, including a comprehensive plan for a democratic Belarus.

Based on its extensive expertise of citizens engagement, community dialogue, and local development, gained during 20 years of work in approximative 40 countries, ALDA will continue its contribution to citizen's involvement in decision making at local level and mobilize resources for communities' development in Belarus.

