

## DELEGATION FOR RELATIONS WITH BELARUS

Brussels, 29 August 2006

### STATEMENT

#### **supporting the nomination of Mr Aleksandr Milinkevich for the 2006 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought**

The delegation of the European Parliament for Relations with Belarus strongly supports the nomination of Mr Aleksandr Milinkevich, leader of Belarus' united opposition forces, for the 2006 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought.

During the last Presidential elections in Belarus on 19 March 2006, which were regarded by the international community as neither free nor fair, Mr Milinkevich took courage to personally challenge the incumbent President Aleksandr Lukashenka, who is considered to be the last remaining dictator in Europe.

Throughout his campaign Mr Milinkevich succeeded in uniting the opposition forces and expressing the desire of a large part of Belarus society to restore democratic rights and political freedoms in their country. He furthermore led mass demonstrations against the non democratic nature of the elections and was detained by the authorities for encouraging people to manifest their fundamental right to freedom of expression and assembly.

Therefore, the Delegation for relations with Belarus believes that Mr Milinkevich merits the honour to be awarded the 2006 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought. This decision of the European Parliament would send a strong signal to the Belarusian people that the European Union remains fully committed to the prospect of freedom and democracy in Belarus and that we do not tolerate breaches of human rights and democratic values on European soil.

*For further information contact:*

*Arnoldas PRANCKEVICIUS, Interparliamentary Relations – European Countries  
Tel. 0032-2-283 25 69, [arnoldas.pranckevicius@europarl.europa.eu](mailto:arnoldas.pranckevicius@europarl.europa.eu)*



## DELEGATION FOR RELATIONS WITH BELARUS

- The Chairman -

Strasbourg, 26 October 2006

### STATEMENT

**by Mr Bodgan KLICH,  
Chairman of the Delegation for relations with Belarus**

**Congratulating Mr Aleksandr Milinkevich on winning the 2006 Sakharov  
Prize for Freedom of Thought**

---

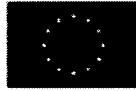
On behalf of the European Parliament's Delegation for Relations with Belarus, I would like to wholeheartedly congratulate Mr Aleksandr Milinkevich, leader of Belarus' united democratic opposition forces, on winning the 2006 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought.

The Delegation for relations with Belarus endorsed the nomination of Mr Milinkevich back in August for his courage to personally challenge the last remaining dictator in Europe and for successfully uniting the democratic opposition and expressing the desire of a large part of Belarus society to restore democratic rights and political freedoms in their country.

This decision of the European Parliament, which is a directly elected representative of EU's 457 million citizens, expresses deep sympathy and solidarity of the EU citizens with the people of Belarus and sends a strong signal that the European Union remains fully committed to the prospect of freedom and democracy in Belarus and that it does not tolerate breaches of human rights and democratic values on European soil.

*For further information contact:*

*Arnoldas PRANCKEVICIUS, Interparliamentary Delegations – European Countries  
tel. 0032-2-283 25 69, [arnoldas.pranckevicius@europarl.europa.eu](mailto:arnoldas.pranckevicius@europarl.europa.eu)*



Brussels, 26 October 2006  
S292/06

**Javier SOLANA,  
EU High Representative for the CFSP,  
congratulates Aleksadr Milinkevich for winning the  
2006 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought**

Javier SOLANA, EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), congratulated today Mr. Aleksadr Milinkevich for winning the 2006 Sakharov Prize:

*"I warmly congratulate Mr Aleksadr Milinkevich, Belarusian opposition leader and former united opposition presidential candidate, for winning the 2006 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought, granted by the European Parliament.*

*Mr Milinkevich has played an important role in consolidating the Belarusian democratic opposition. He provided a genuine choice to electorate, under the difficult circumstances of the fundamentally flawed 19 March 2006 presidential elections in Belarus. I have met Mr Milinkevich several times, and have first had knowledge of his deep commitment to political pluralism in his country and furthering the inalienable democratic rights of the Belarusian people."*

---

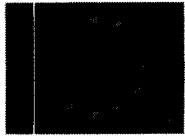
**FOR FURTHER DETAILS:**

Spokesperson of the Secretary General, High Representative for CFSP

■ +32 (0)2 281 6467 / 8239 / 5150 / 5151 ☎ +32 (0)2 281 5694

internet: <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/solana>

e-mail: [presse.cabinet@consilium.europa.eu](mailto:presse.cabinet@consilium.europa.eu)



Delegation of the European Commission  
to Ukraine and Belarus

Представництво Європейської Комісії  
в Україні та Білорусі

**Statement of Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy Benita Ferrero-Waldner congratulates Aleksandr Milinkevich on winning the 2006 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought**

"I congratulate Mr. Aleksandr Milinkevich on winning the 2006 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought. Mr. Milinkevich has been a courageous fighter for democratic freedom and human rights in Belarus. As the leader of the Belarus united democratic opposition forces, he engaged himself consistently for greater freedom of thought and expression. The Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought fully recognizes his personal efforts.

With this prize, all those in Belarus who bravely fight at their own personal risk for democracy, are also awarded further international recognition. With this price the EU indicates its strong hope to see free and fair local elections in January 2007. "



---

## Sakharov Prize awarded to Belarus opposition politician Alexander Milinkevich

28.10.2006

Federal Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier today (28 October) issued the following statement in Berlin on the decision by the European Parliament to award this year's "Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought" to the Belarus opposition politician Alexander Milinkevich:

*"I welcome the European Parliament's decision to award this year's Sakharov Prize to Alexander Milinkevich, and I warmly congratulate him on this award.*

*There is no more prominent and courageous advocate for the work of the democratic opposition and the fight for freedom of opinion in Belarus than Alexander Milinkevich. His remarkable bravery and commitment provide a beacon of hope for many Belarus citizens.*

*The European Parliament is paying special tribute to his non-violent and courageous resistance to the Belarus government and is sending an important signal of support for that country's civil society, as the Belarus government is cutting itself off both from the European community of shared values and from its own citizens.*

*At the same time I see this award as a call to Minsk to release its political prisoners, including the opposition politician Alexander Kosulin, forthwith."*

The European Parliament's Sakharov Prize will be presented on 13 December. It was established in 1988 and honours commitment to human rights and basic freedoms (particularly freedom of expression), protection of minorities, respect for international law and the promotion of democracy and the rule of law.

---

© 1995-2006 Auswärtiges Amt



## 2006 Sakharov Prize (October 26, 2006)

France welcomes the European Parliament's award on October 26, 2006 of the 2006 Sakharov Prize to Alexander Milinkevich, leader of the democratic opposition in Belarus. The prize is awarded annually to individuals or organizations that stand up for human rights. The nomination of Mr. Milinkevich comes two years after the Belarus Association of Journalists received the award.

The award goes to Mr. Milinkevich for the determination and struggle of one man who has been consistently active in the last few years in promoting human rights, democracy and freedom in his country. France wishes at this time to pay a warm tribute to Mr. Milinkevich and his commitment to Europe's values.

Mr. Milinkevich was received early this year by Foreign Minister Philippe Douste-Blazy and European Affairs Minister Delegate Catherine Colonna.



Press Statement  
**Sean McCormack, Spokesman**  
Washington, DC  
October 27, 2006

## **Belarus: Congratulations to Sakharov Prize Winner Alexander Milinkevich**

The United States congratulates Alexander Milinkevich of Belarus on winning the prestigious Sakharov prize from the Conference of the Presidents in the European Parliament. The prize is awarded each year to celebrate freedom of thought and demonstrates Europe's recognition, which we share, of the courage of the political opposition in pursuing democracy in the hostile environment that exists in Belarus today. The Lukashenko regime has repeatedly demonstrated a disdain for basic human freedoms to maintain its dictatorial rule. The regime continues to hold numerous prisoners of conscience who are being detained solely because they have tried to exercise their fundamental rights, and we urge their immediate release. This award shows that the indomitable human will for open political expression and freedom of speech exemplified by Andrei Sakharov is alive and well in Belarus today. The United States is proud to stand with the Belarusian people.

**2006/ 971**

Released on October 27, 2006