



American Federation
of Teachers, AFL-CIO

AFT Teachers
AFT PSRP
AFT Higher Education
AFT Public Employees
AFT Healthcare

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March 29, 2006

H.E. Mikhail Khvostov
Embassy of Belarus
1619 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20009

Fax: (202) 986-1805

Dear Ambassador Khvostov:

I am writing on behalf of the 1.3 million members of the American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO, to protest the arrests of several trade union representatives in Belarus in the days preceding last Sunday's elections. The arrests were made as a part of your government's campaign to manipulate the vote and deny the people of Belarus a free, fair and democratic election. These actions and other efforts to intimidate trade unionists in Belarus represent serious violations of internationally recognized human and labor rights standards.

We are informed by our colleagues at the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions that those arrested include Valentin Lazarenkov, Igor Maslovsky, Peter Tollor and Anna Kanyus of the Belarusian Free Trade Union (SPB); Sergey Lipnitsky of the Belarus Independent Trade union (BITU); Ivan Roman and Victor Kozlov, of the Radio and Electronic Workers' Union (REP); and Vasily Levchenkov of the Free Trade Union of Metal Workers. In addition to detaining them, your government has instructed the judicial authorities to levy fines against these unjustly arrested leaders.

I would appreciate hearing from you regarding the steps that will be taken to insure the immediate release of these union leaders.

Sincerely,

Edward J. McElroy
President

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