

BELARUSIAN HUMAN RIGHTS CENTER “VIASNA” PROTESTS AGAINST POLITICALLY MOTIVATED PERSECUTIONS OF STUDENTS

During the last month the following students were expelled for political reasons: **Zmitser Zhalezniczenka** (expelled from the 3rd year at Mathematical faculty of Homel State University; **Katsiaryna Salauyova** (expelled from the 2nd year of faculty of history and philology of Polatsk State University; **Fiodar Charankou** (expelled from the 1st year of Mazyr State pedagogical University; **Franak Viachorka** (expelled from the 3rd year of faculty of journalistic of the Belarusian State University; and **Anton Kalinouski** (expelled from the 1st year of Minsk State Linguistics University).

Zmitser Zhalezniczenka, Katsiaryna Salauyova, Franak Viachorka, and Anton Kalinouski always showed good academic results, they had a high GPA; that is why we consider their expulsion from universities as persecution because of their civic and political activities and membership in political parties and movements.

Katsiaryna Salauyova was expelled twice. After the first expulsion her status of a student was restored under the public pressure. She is charged under Article 193.1 of the Criminal Code, for activities on behalf of an unregistered non-governmental organization.

Zmitser Zhalezniczenka was also expelled twice. The court found the first expulsion illegal. After the second expulsion he was immediately drafted to the army. Court hearing on the lawfulness of the university administration to expel him again has not taken place yet.

Franak Viachorka and Anton Kalinouski were expelled from their universities when they had served administrative arrests after the protests actions in January 2008. Serving the arrests, they had no chance to take exams in time, which was evaluated by the administration as “poor academic progress”.

The **Human Rights Center “Viasna”** considers expulsion of Franak Viachorka, Anton Kalinouski, Zmitser Zhalezniczenka, Fiodar Charankou, and Katsiaryna Salauyova politically-motivated persecution and demands from university administrations to take immediate measures for restoring these students in their universities.

The **Human Rights Center “Viasna”** also expresses concern with the facts of KGB pressure on the active students, with agreement and assistance of administrations of higher educational establishments. We believe, participation in the planned political persecution of students is incompatible with the notion of academic freedoms and unacceptable for democratic countries.

We demand to stop this shameful practice and reserve the right to address international students organizations, and European university organizations and separate universities with the request to stop all contacts with the higher educational establishments, administrations of which participate in the political persecution of students.