

**DUBLIN**

Front Line Defenders – Head Office
First Floor, Avoca Court
Temple Road, Blackrock
Co. Dublin, A94 R7W3, Ireland

info@frontlinedefenders.org
www.frontlinedefenders.org

phone +353 1 212 3750
fax +353 1 212 1001

BRUSSELS

Front Line Defenders – EU Office
Square Marie-Louise 72
1000 Brussels
Belgium

euoffice@frontlinedefenders.org
www.frontlinedefenders.org

phone +32 2 230 9383
fax +32 2 230 0028

Belarus: Woman human rights defender Nasta Loika sentenced to 15 days of administrative arrest

On September 7, 2022, woman human rights defender **Nasta Loika** was sentenced to 15 days of administrative arrest, on “petty hooliganism” charges, a violation under Article 19.1 of the Code of Administrative Offences. The previous day, on 6 September 2022, Belarusian law enforcement officials arrested and detained the defender near the premises of the Minsk City Court.

[Nasta Loika](#) is a prominent Belarusian woman human rights defender working in the field of human rights education. She also addresses repressive “anti-extremist” laws, and advocates for the protection of the migrants and stateless people rights in Belarus. In the summer of 2021, Belarusian authorities shut down the organisation where Nasta Loika previously worked for - Human Constanta - which promoted public interests and joint actions in response to modern challenges in the field of human rights, as a part of an orchestrated attack against the civil society in the country.

On 7 September 2022, Nasta Loika was sentenced to 15 days of administrative arrest, on “petty hooliganism” charges, a violation under Article 19.1 of the Code of Administrative Offences. She is being held at the Offender Isolation Center for Administrative Detainees “Okrestina”. On 6 September 2022, Belarusian law enforcement officials arrested and detained woman human rights defender Nasta Loika near the premises of the Minsk City Court. The arrest of the human rights defender occurred as she was leaving a court hearing on the “Revolutionary Action.” This concerned the sentencing of a group of individuals, including woman human rights defender Maria Rabkova, who was sentenced to 15 years of prison, and human rights defender Andrey Chiapyk, who was sentenced to 6 years of prison. Despite the fact that the court hearing was held behind closed doors, people gathered outside to show them support.

This is not the first time that Belarusian authorities have targeted Nasta Loika for her human rights work. Since August 2021, she has been a suspect in a criminal case against Human Rights Center “Viasna” concerning tax evasion. On 13 August 2021, she was arrested and brought in for questioning to the Belarus State Control Committee’s Department of Financial Investigations. On the same day, her apartment was raided and she ended up spending 72 hours in detention.

Front Line Defenders is gravely concerned about the arrest, detention, and lack of information on the whereabouts of woman human rights defender Nasta Loika. Front Line Defenders believes that the woman human rights defender is being repeatedly targeted for her peaceful human rights work. Her arrest is part of the increasing attacks against Belarus's human rights defenders and civil society by Belarusian authorities.

Front Line Defenders calls upon authorities in Belarus to:

1. Immediately release woman human rights defender Nasta Loika from custody and ensure the protection of her physical and psychological integrity;

2. Drop all charges against Nasta Loika as they are solely motivated by her legitimate and peaceful work in defense of human rights;
3. Cease the nationwide crackdown against human rights defenders for their peaceful and legitimate human rights work;
4. Guarantee in all circumstances that all human rights defenders in Belarus can carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions.

Front Line Defenders Board of Directors

Denis O'Brien, Jim Conway, Roja Fazaeli, Maria Mulcahy, Kieran Mulvey, Mary Jane Real (Philippines), David Sykes, Arnold Tsunga (Zimbabwe), Verónica Vidal (Uruguay)

Front Line Defenders International Advisory Council

James L. Cavallaro, Maryam Elahi, Michel Forst, Hina Jilani, Mary Lawlor

Front Line, The International Foundation for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders trading as Front Line Defenders, is registered in Ireland as a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital. Registered Office: First Floor, Avoca Court, Temple Road, Blackrock, Co. Dublin, A94 R7W3, Ireland.

Company No. 593190; Registered Charity No. 20204494; CHY 22404