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### **Belarus: Woman human rights defender Nasta Loika sentenced to 15 days of administrative arrest under “petty hooliganism” charges**

On 31 October 2022, the Pieršamajski District Court in Minsk, Belarus sentenced woman human rights defender **Nasta Loika** under “petty hooliganism” charges under Article 19.1 of the Code of Administrative Offences to 15 days of administrative arrest. What prompted the charge was not reported. Prior to this sentence, on 28 October 2022, Nasta Loika was arbitrarily detained by security forces in Minsk, allegedly, for extremism charges. This was the third time the woman human rights defender was sentenced on the same charge since September 2022.

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

On 31 October 2022, Nasta Loika was sentenced by the Pieršamajski District Court in Minsk, Belarus to 15 days of administrative detention for “petty hooliganism” under Article 19.1 of the Code of Administrative Offences. The trial took place online with a lawyer present, but what prompted the charge was not reported. Nasta Loika is now detained in Akrestina detention centre in Minsk.

On 28 October 2022, at 2pm, the woman human rights defender was arbitrary detained by security forces in Minsk. At 6pm, one of the state-affiliated telegram channels published a [video](#), where Nasta Loika, was handcuffed, and “confesses” that she received funding from foreign organisations. The officials accuse the woman human rights defender of “aiding extremism,” a criminal offence under Article 361-4 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Belarus. In the video, woman human rights defender, admits to her participation in peaceful protests, confirmed that she worked for Human Constanta, a human rights organization that was shut down by the Belarusian Government. Working for an organisation that has been shut down is a criminal offence under Belarusian law. Nasta Loika also admitted on camera that Human Constanta received funding from Amnesty International. The post, published along with the video, suggests that receiving such funding designates the organisation as part of “the collective West sponsoring a revolution in Belarus.” The officials in the video calls the woman human rights defender a “famous fraudster.” On the same day, Nasta Loika’s apartment was raided by officials from the Main Directorate for Combating Organised Crime and Corruption of the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Belarus, and her equipment was confiscated.

Nasta Loika has repeatedly faced retaliation for her human rights work. Since 6 September 2022, she has been sentenced to two consecutive administrative detentions based on petty hooliganism charges. During her previous administrative detention, the woman human rights defender had no

access to legal support and she was denied the right to receive medication and warm clothes while in detention.

Front Line Defenders is gravely concerned about the continuous arrest and detention 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 in Belarus. The persistent charges and arrests of Nasta Loika is part of the increasing attacks against Belarus's human rights defenders and civil society by Belarusian authorities, and calls for immediate and unconditional release of woman human rights defender Nasta Loika.

**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 defence 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.

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