



## **YEPP Resolution: "Priorities on democracy in Belarus"**

*Adopted at the YEPP Congress in Sofia (Bulgaria) on 11 May 2013*

### **Recognizing:**

- That Belarus is a gross violator of basic human rights, and it is the responsibility of the European community to ensure the human rights of all people
- That the political opposition is under severe pressure from the authorities. Amongst this are threats, expulsion from university and jail. Civil society is almost non-existent and the media is largely state controlled by the heavy-handed rule of President Alexander Lukashenko
- That Amnesty International considers several opposition figures to be prisoners of conscience. Included on this list are Zmitser Dashkevich and Eduard Lobau both of whom are members of Young Front (Malady Front) which is an associated member of YEPP.
- That Lithuania will be the next EU Chair and holds the EU Presidency from July-December 2013

### **Acknowledging:**

- Lithuania hosts the Belarus free university in Vilnius (European Humanities University) where many Belarusian students are studying, but also maintains lucrative potash and petro-chemical contracts with Minsk
- That the EHU is widely political and financial supported by e.g. the United States, several west-European countries and the Nordic Council
- That democratization in the world is an important target for the European Union

### **YEPP calls on:**

- The EU to support civil society in Belarus because this is the only way to hold President Aleksander Lukashenko accountable and at the same time build up a group of leaders that can lead the country when the dictatorship falls.
- The EU to demand the release of political prisoners before official dialogue is resumed with the government in Belarus.
- Lithuania, during its EU Presidency, to set extra support for the improvement on human rights in Belarus