

# OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media reiterates call for immediate and unconditional release of all detained journalists in Belarus

VIENNA, 16 March 2022 — The OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Teresa Ribeiro, today reiterated her call to free all journalists and other media workers who have been sentenced, arrested or detained in Belarus.

Ribeiro's comments follow the sentencing on 15 March of editor-in-chief Yahor Martsinovich and marketing director Andrey Skurko, who both work with Nasha Niva, one of the leading Belarusian news platforms, to two and a half years in jail. Both Martsinovich and Skurko were charged with causing material damage after allegedly paying wrong utility fees for their office. Reportedly, the alleged damage to the state was fully paid off before the trial. The men have been in custody since July 2021, following searches of their homes and the editorial office.

Earlier, on 3 March, Aleh Hruzdilovich, a former correspondent of RFE/RL's Belarus Service, was imprisoned to one and a half years in jail for alleged participation in protests, although he was working as a journalist. He has been in custody since December 2021.

"I strongly condemn the continued arrests and convictions of journalists on trumped-up charges in Belarus," Ribeiro said. "I reiterate my call on the Belarusian authorities to put an end to these practices and to immediately and unconditionally release all media workers who have been imprisoned, arrested or detained."

According to the Belarusian Association of Journalists, 30 journalists and other media workers are currently in prison in Belarus.

*The OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media observes media developments in all 57 OSCE participating States. She provides early warning on violations of freedom of expression and media freedom and promotes full compliance with OSCE media freedom commitments. Learn more at [www.osce.org/fom](http://www.osce.org/fom), Twitter: [@OSCE\\_RFoM](https://twitter.com/OSCE_RFoM) and on [www.facebook.com/osce.rfom](https://www.facebook.com/osce.rfom).*

For PDF attachments or links to sources of further information, please visit: <https://www.osce.org/representative-on-freedom-of-media/514072>

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