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Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Borrell  
on behalf of the European Commission  
(8.4.2021)

The EU has closely followed the trial of Katsiaryna Andreieva and Darya Chultsova. Staff from the EU Delegation in Minsk attended the trial. On 19 March 2021, the EU spokesperson for Foreign Affairs and Security issued a statement on *the escalating repression of journalists*<sup>1</sup>, strongly condemning the repression carried out by the Belarusian authorities since the falsified elections of August 2020. The EU is deeply concerned about the crackdown on journalists and pays particular attention to this aspect of the repression. The EU inter alia delivered a statement in an Arria meeting in the United Nations Security Council<sup>2</sup>, underlining that “*the Belarusian authorities must fully comply with all their regional and international obligations and commitments related to freedom of opinion and expression and media freedom, including on the safety of journalists*”.

The EU is also delivering on its commitment to support the people of Belarus. In December 2020, the EU adopted a EUR 24 million assistance package, which directly benefits the Belarusian people, in particular civil society, independent media, youth and small and medium-sized enterprises and improve health capacities, and which will be operational shortly. This came in addition to the EUR 3.7 million EU emergency support immediately mobilised for the victims of oppression and independent media after the Belarus presidential elections held in August 2020.

The EU will continue to work in support of journalists and the freedom of expression in Belarus, which are under continuous attack.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/belarus/93528/belarus-statement-spokesperson-escalating-repression-journalists\\_en](https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/belarus/93528/belarus-statement-spokesperson-escalating-repression-journalists_en)

<sup>2</sup> [https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/un-new-york/91928/eu-intervention-united-nations-security-council-arria-formula-meeting-media-freedom-belarus\\_en](https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/un-new-york/91928/eu-intervention-united-nations-security-council-arria-formula-meeting-media-freedom-belarus_en)