

The information is aggregated from open source online resources and our own practice. In these newsletters, we will update you in brief on everyday human rights violations in numbers and facts.

## **Saturday 13 August 2022 to Friday 19 August 2022**

Human Constanta expresses its [solidarity](#) with the people of Ukraine. We urge the international community to prioritize the voices and stories of Ukrainians, highlight violations of human rights and international law, call for accountability for the actions of the aggressor, and [support the most vulnerable groups fleeing the war without discrimination](#).

### **Belarus to denounce the Optional Protocol to ICCPR**

A bill on the [denouncing](#) of the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights appeared in the lower chamber of the Belarusian parliament. If the bill is signed into law, Belarus will cease being a party to the Protocol, effectively reversing its acceptance of the Human Rights Committee's jurisdiction – the Covenant's treaty body, competent to consider individual complaints against Belarus. If the denunciation is to take place, Belarus will remain a party to the Covenant, yet the Committee will only be able to consider complaints, submitted to it before the denouncement. So far, the Committee has considered over 100 cases against Belarus, including on the death penalty, the over-regulation of laws on public gatherings, arbitrary detentions, and persecution for expressing dissident opinions.

### **Persecution related to Russian aggression against Ukraine**

On 16 August 2022, the Gomel Regional Court sentenced a resident of Mozyr, [Anna Pyshnik](#), to 3 years in a general regime colony for "facilitating extremist activities" under part 2 of Article 361-4 of the Criminal Code. According to the prosecution, Pyshnik sent a video of the movement of a military helicopter to a Telegram channel.

On 17 August 2022, [Irina Prigova](#) was sentenced to 1.5 years in prison for creating protest and anti-war graffiti in pencil and chalk, saying "No war," "Putin is a murderer," "Glory to Ukraine!" and other phrases, as well as for placing white-red-white and yellow-blue ribbons in the streets of Brest.

### **"Extremism" cases on the rise**

On 15 August 2022, [Denis Landichanko](#), a 23-year-old manager of a McDonald's restaurant, was detained in Minsk. Telegram channels close to the security forces report that the young man is suspected of "distributing extremist materials," for re-sending messages from Telegram channels critical of the government, and "distributing harmful and tasteless food."

On 16 August 2022, Novopolotsk activist [Andrei Golovin](#) was convicted to 15 days in jail for "spreading extremist materials" – the fifth time in a row. In total, he is to spend 75 days behind bars.

On 17 August 2022, information appeared about the detention of illustrator [Vadim Bagriy](#) for allegedly creating Telegram stickers (emojis), which, according to law enforcement, incite hostility. It is alleged that he created stickers for Telegram which are critical of the government, with satirical inscriptions addressed to Alexander Lukashenko; these were recently recognized in Belarus as extremist materials.

### **Detention for participation in 2020 protests continue**

Security forces continue to search for and detain people who took part in peaceful protests in 2020. Most of them are charged with “participating in actions that grossly violate public order, which caused disruption of transport.” The detention of [Evgeny Gritsuk](#), [Svetlana Sakovich](#), [Igor Nazarenko](#), and [Maria and Nikolai Kostenko](#) is known about.

### **Pressure on independent media continues**

On 15 August 2022, the Ministry of Information blocked the website of the independent Belarusian socio-political publication [Narodnaya Volya](#), founded in 1995.

### **Political prisoners**

The total number of political prisoners in Belarus is [1303](#). The number continues to grow daily.