



Resolutions

*Adopted by the 36th General Assembly
of the International Federation of Liberal Youth
convened in Kraków, Poland, on 25 January 2014.*

Resolution on the Upcoming Local Elections in Belarus

Adopted by IFLRY's 36th General Assembly in Kraków, Poland, on 25 January 2014.

Considering that

- the Belarusian government pledged to consider recommendations made by OSCE/ODIHR for the improvement of the electoral process and the electoral law to make it compliant with international standards many years ago;
- despite amendments that were introduced into the Belarusian electoral code in 2010 and 2011 and 2013 the electoral process is far from being in line with OSCE commitments and international standards;

Noting that

- the changes to the electoral code made in 2013, just in time for the upcoming local elections in March 2014, worsened the situation of the opposition candidates by excluding funding from the state budget and thus forcing them to rely solely on private funds whereas foreign donations are forbidden by law;
- the authorities have narrowed the space for opposition parties and coalitions to conduct legal activities and have put up additional obstacles for example by prohibiting certain questions in opinion-polls or statements during campaigning;
- other amendments are used to further de-politicize society and reduce the opposition's influence during the elections by excluding candidates from performing "trustee" functions and forcing them to inform about their income if they are not officially employed;
- in addition the term of limitation for appeals against violations will be shortened and election observers from inside the country will be forced to seek accreditation just like international observer missions.

Recalling that

- the regime used massive repression against political organizations and civil society organizations in general throughout the last years and implemented changes into Belarusian criminal law that allow for harsh measures against the smallest impulse of independent thought and free speech;
- several political- and human-rights activists remain in Belarusian prisons including the leader of the Human Rights Center "Viasna", Ales Byalyatski, among others;

- the government retains absolute control over state media and uses propaganda intensively to exhaust political opposition and civil-society activists in public opinion;

IFLRY

- condemns the latest aggravation of the opposition's possibilities to compete in "elections" in Belarus;
- urges the Belarusian government to take immediate steps to bring the electoral law in compliance with international standards and to guarantee legal status of opposition parties as well as unimpeded participation in the upcoming elections;
- urges the Belarusian government to ensure the registration of all eligible candidates for the upcoming local and presidential elections, to guarantee open campaigning and equal access to state controlled media, and to allow the representatives of democratic parties and movements to be equally represented in electoral commissions;
- demands again the immediate release of all political prisoners and the nullification of the verdicts already spoken against opposition- and civil society activists;
- calls on the Council of Europe, the European Commission, the EU High Representative and the OSCE to closely monitor the electoral process contrary to the normal assertion that local elections are not as important as parliamentary or presidential elections;
- calls on the European Institutions and the international community to uphold and intensify sanctions directed against the Belarusian regime as long as the situation of Human Rights is not decisively improved;
- calls on the IFLRY Bureau and the IFLRY Belarus Programme to raise awareness for the situation throughout the local elections and the upcoming World Ice-Hockey-Championships as well as to uphold and intensify the support for Belarusian partner organizations;
- calls on the IFLRY Member Organizations to actively increase awareness for the Belarus cause within the liberal family and in society and to support the struggle of the Belarusian youth for a democratic future.

Resolution on the Actual Situation in Ukraine

Adopted by IFLRY's 36th General Assembly in Kraków, Poland, on 25 January 2014.

Considering that

- The Ukrainian Government's decision to suspend the process of preparation for the signing of the Association Agreement has aroused discontent and massive protest within the country;
- In this context, the Ukrainian security forces made brutal and unacceptable use of force against peaceful demonstrators, opposition parties and the media;
- These extensive human rights violations in Ukraine and the authoritarian rollback of the Ukrainian government pose a danger for young democracies especially in Eastern Europe;
- A continued and successful democratization of Ukraine would have a reasonable spill-over in the countries of Eastern Europe, also in Russia;
- Civil society in Ukraine needs intensive and decisive support from European actors in these hard times;

Noting that

- Ukrainian society undertook intensive historical momentum during the last decade, overcoming Post Soviet scopes and heredity, when Ukrainian citizens declared their will to move towards western liberal democracies and defined their values as closely related to European ones;
- European and international actors – both national governments and international organizations and institutions in most cases apart from lip service did not adopt strong measures against the authorities violating human rights several times since the start of the protests;
- Ukraine is a strategic partner for EU in Eastern Partnership region and one of the key actors in EU neighborhood policy;
- Ukraine's possible affiliation with the Eurasian Customs Union would completely block further European integration of Ukraine on political and economic levels and might also create a prejudice for other countries in the region to drop out of the instruments the ENP;
- Ideological and economic influence and blackmailing of Ukraine by the government of the Russian Federation shall not be underestimated;

Recalling that

- It is specifically the younger generation in Ukraine that is taking to the streets and underlining the strong requirement of the Ukrainian people for further democratic transformation and European integration of their country;

- According to several polls and studies the majority of the Ukrainian people, even in the east of the country, denounce the actual course of their government and specifically condemn the violence against their fellow citizens;

Believing that

- The Ukrainian people have the right to live in a free and democratic country, where geopolitical directions and affiliations are neither decided by outside pressure and blackmailing, nor by a corrupt, authoritarian government;
- Human rights violations by police and other security-forces are not acceptable and should be followed by decisive answers by national governments in the EU and European and international institutions;

IFLRY

- Deplores the decision of the Ukrainian government to leave the path towards better cooperation with the European Union and condemns the human rights violations inflicted by security forces under the responsibility of President Yanukovich and his administration;
- Calls its member organizations to raise awareness about the situation in Ukraine, among their membership, in their mother-parties and if possible among governmental institutions and the general public in their countries;
- Calls on the European Parliament and the European Commission to increase the pressure on the government of the Russian Federation and consider sanctions against the actors of the Ukrainian regime in case the human rights violations against representatives of the opposition and peaceful protesters are continued;
- Calls on the European Parliament, the European Commission, the Council of Europe, the member countries of the EU and all concerned Non-State-Actors to increase support for Ukrainian Civil Society and democratic forces;
- Urges the European Commission and the national governments to liberalize the visa policy for Ukrainian citizens, especially for students and young people, as well to suspend the visa regime for short-term trips to EU for citizens of Ukraine;
- Calls on the IFLRY Bureau to promote democracy, liberalism and European integration by specific projects and interventions in the country.

Human rights travel document for whistle blowers

Resolution adopted by IFLRY's 36th General Assembly in Kraków, Poland, on 25 January 2014.

Noting that

- In June 2013 Edward Snowden leaked approximately 22.000 secret US state documents;
- Some of these documents uncovered violations of the declaration of human rights article 12, ensuring the right to privacy, committed by the US government;
- Snowden as a result of this has become a refugee, seeking asylum from several countries;
- Most countries declined the application based on the grounds that Snowden was not currently in the country he sought asylum in;
- Snowden had his passport revoked and has failed to obtain a legitimate travel document;

Believing that

- In the event of systematic secretive violations of the Declaration of Human Rights, there is a need for whistleblowing in order to secure the fundamental rights of the citizens of the world;
- Any person with positive knowledge of secret human rights violations that does not inform the population of such actions in effect will become an accomplice to the violations;
- Bringing human rights violations to light is in the common interest of the citizens of the world, and as such any actions of this nature should be protected under international law, even in the event that the leak breaches a confidentiality clause;

IFLRY

- Criticises the states that refused to give Snowden asylum;
- Decrees that it is the responsibility of every individual to enlighten their fellow global citizens in cases where human rights are being violated;
- Investigate the possibility of the establishment of an international treaty, granting the UNHCHR the possibility of issuing a travel document to recognised human rights activists.

No More NSA-practices: Privacy First!

Resolution adopted by IFLRY's 36th General Assembly in Kraków, Poland, on 25 January 2014.

Noting that

- Recent events have taken place in the United States and around the world regarding the abuse of the right for privacy of our citizens;
- The collection of information by illegal means from citizens and allied government officials through the interception of telephone calls, internet and social media, has been defended for the sake of national security;
- Article 17 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights explicitly states that "No one shall be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to unlawful attacks on his honour and reputation;

Taking into account that

- The right to respect for private life and private correspondence are fundamental for a free and liberal society;
- The recent events in the United States do not coincide with this right;

IFLRY

- Condemns the interception of communication of citizens without appropriate judicial and democratic supervision by the United States, other governments and any part it played in US Foreign Policy;
- Calls for governments to respect the rights by not intercepting and using personal information from telephone calls, internet and social media;
- Calls for all governments to conduct intelligence activities in the rule of law framework and under transparent democratic supervision.

Resolution on Catalan self-determination

Adopted by IFLRY's 36th General Assembly in Kraków, Poland, on 25 January 2014.

Considering

- That legitimacy of democratic systems and of political institutions is based on political participation;
- That after 35 years trying to fit Catalonia into Spain in a politically comfortable way, there is a common feeling among most Catalan citizens: Spain in being re-centralized, multiculturalism rejected and the hope of a tolerant and inclusive country which they hoped would be built after Franco seems today unreachable;
- That, in this scenario, to preserve its identity, language, culture, economy and political self-government today public opinion in Catalonia favors the celebration of a referendum so that Catalan society can choose its own future freely, peacefully and democratically;

Acknowledging

- That the Catalan movement for self-determination is a peaceful, broad, grassroots social movement. That two huge protest marches have taken place in the last years in the streets of Barcelona. The first, in 2010, attended by over 1 million people; the second, in 2012, by 1.5 million, making it one of the largest ever to take place in Europe. These protest have changed the political landscape in Catalonia;
- That, following Catalan elections in November, in March 2013, a resolution calling on the Catalan Government to negotiate with the Spanish Government in order to hold a referendum was supported by 77% of MPs in the Catalan Parliament;
- That there are a number of existing legal bases which would allow for a referendum to be held on the political future of Catalonia. The Spanish Government's rejection of Catalan referendum is based on political rather than legal motives;

IFLRY calls for

- Democratic principles to be preserved within Spain, allowing Catalan citizens to express their democratic will, freely in a referendum on Catalonia's political future;
- Recognition that voting in a referendum should stand as best practices in order to resolve territorial political conflicts;
- The Spanish Government to agree with the Catalan Government on the terms for a referendum of independence in Catalonia following the UK example.

Resolution on Rise of extremism and its danger to democracy

Adopted by IFLRY's 36th General Assembly in Kraków, Poland, on 25 January 2014.

Considering

- That the economic crisis, its social effects, and the lack of ethical behaviour of some politicians have contributed to weaken support to political parties and public institutions in some countries;
- That in this context, especially in Europe, we have seen the rise of political representation and social support to xenophobic and extreme movements;
- That these parties do not only speak openly against racial equality but also often provoke social disturbance and violent acts. That these political options are a threat to political stability, to democracy and democratic values;
- That totalitarianism, intolerance and non-recognition of pluralism are liberalism's adversaries. The answer to the rise of extremisms should be in a clear model of sustainable economic growth and fighting this message of fear and false security by a clear project able to recover the lost hope for a better future;

IFLRY hereby,

- Stands against the rise of political and social extremism that uses the economic crisis to extend its ideology based on racial intolerance and undermining of ethnic and religious minorities;
- Condemns acts of discrimination, violence and fascist protest, with special mention of those promoted by parties with parliamentary representation.

Stronger protection of human rights in the context of mega sporting events

Resolution adopted by IFLRY's 36th General Assembly in Kraków, Poland, on 25 January 2014.

Noting that

- Over the last years, cases of serious infringements of basic rights have been reported in connection to several mega sporting events (“MSEs”), such as the Olympic Games and the FIFA World Cup. For the 2008 Olympics in Beijing, up to 1.5 million people were reported displaced before the games, and in New Delhi, some 35.000 families were evicted. For the FIFA World Cup in South Africa, police harassment of homeless people was seen, and forced removal of street vendors, who thus lost their livelihoods. Also in 2008, 10 people died during the construction of the Olympic venue and 17.000 workers reported exploitation. Cases of infringements on the rights of migrant workers have been reported for several events, including the 2012 Olympics in London;
- The Winter Olympics of 2014 will take place in Sochi, Russia, in February, and the World Cup Football will be arranged in Brazil, which is also hosting the 2016 Olympics. The FIFA World Cup will be arranged in Russia in 2018, followed by Qatar in 2022. In Brazil and Russia, mass protests are already taking place, and reports casting a shadow over how human rights are respected in the run up for the games have been published;
- NGO's such as Human Rights Watch, Amnesty and several newspapers have addressed allegations of grave infringements on the rights of migrant workers, LGBTI-persons, forced evictions, the right to free assembly, and environmental issues in relation to the upcoming Olympic Games in Sochi, Russia. For the FIFA World Cup in Brazil, cases of forced evictions, poor working conditions and deaths among workers, as well as discrimination have been reported;

Considering that

- Human rights and fundamental freedoms must be inseparable from any and all human activity;
- MSEs are more than “just sports”. They bring both risks and opportunities to whole societies, as they may attract investments and create jobs, develop areas and improve infrastructure, boost tourism and services, etc. However, these changes may weaken the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms if not subjected to any regulations or control mechanisms ensuring human rights standards are met;
- Promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms are often listed

among the aims and purposes of MSEs. For instance, The International Olympic Committee speaks of having a “mission to spark social change through sport”;

Taking into account that

- In 2012, a communiqué on human rights was agreed upon by Brazil, Russia, South Korea and the United Kingdom in relation to the upcoming Olympic and Paralympic games, including the role of businesses;

Recognizing that

- While MSEs should and cannot be held responsible for all problems in hosting states, the organizing bodies should require certain responsibilities of hosting governments;
- The consideration of human rights aspects has gained increasing weight in the arrangements of MSEs in recent years, and such events are always an opportunity to push for positive change;
- The positive effects of MSEs should not be overlooked. Thousands of jobs are created, several of the Olympic villages have been turned into homes after the games, and improvements in public attitudes towards disabilities and participation in sports have been reported in relation to MSEs;

IFLRY

- Calls upon governments and the organizing bodies of MSEs to set up stricter requirements on hosting governments in ensuring human rights and freedoms are respected in the whole process of arranging the events, including corporate responsibility for sponsors involved;
- Calls upon the organizing bodies and the international community to take action when systematic violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms are detected in relation to MSEs;
- Calls for the Member Organizations of IFLRY and Liberal International affiliated with political parties to address these issues in their home countries.

Resolution on LGBT+ Rights within the Commonwealth

Adopted by IFLRY's 36th General Assembly in Kraków, Poland, on 25 January 2014.

Noting

- That in a vast majority of Commonwealth countries homosexuality is illegal (including other forms of sexuality/gender identity expression);
 - The latest figures say that in 41 of the 53 countries this is the case;
 - This may be subject to dispute +/- one country;
- Two of these countries have the death penalty for LGBT people;
 - Six have life imprisonment;
 - One even permits torture by flogging;
- That LGBT+ people remain the victims of brutal murders, violent attacks and daily discrimination;
- That the Commonwealth Charter cites the need of the Commonwealth to be a force for good in the world;
- That the Commonwealth Charter also states that it is committed to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and that it is 'implacably opposed to all forms of discrimination, whether rooted in gender, race, colour, creed, political belief or other grounds';

Believing

- That lawful discrimination against people based on their sexuality and/or gender identity and expression is absolutely wrong and must not be tolerated;
- That, considering its charter, this discrimination should not be a value that the Commonwealth appears to support;
- That the Commonwealth is unable to be a force for good in the world whilst so many of its member countries have laws endorsing such discrimination in place;
- That as the situation in each country, both legally and for activists on the ground, is different, dangerous and compiled of so many factors, the same tactics for change that are appropriate for one country may not work in another;

IFLRY Resolves

- To assert its position of belief in equality under the law throughout the world and belief that although each country is a free, individual member of the Commonwealth, membership comes with the expectation that it will strive towards upholding the values of the Commonwealth, as laid down in the Charter.
- To consult with Member Organisations (MOs) in Commonwealth countries where there are high levels of discrimination against LGBT+ citizens about how best IFLRY can campaign in a sensitive, respectful and effective way, together with them, to improve the situation(s).
- To co-operate with experienced and knowledgeable charities, NGOs

and individuals working to end the discrimination taking place and support their work where possible.

- To develop a campaign for MOs outside of the Commonwealth countries affected to participate in, in line with the recommendations of those mentioned in points 2 and 3 of 'resolves'.

Access to safe abortion is a right: A step backward is not possible

Resolution adopted by IFLRY's 36th General Assembly in Kraków, Poland, on 25 January 2014.

Recalling that

- the *IFLRY Manifesto* states the right over one's own body is absolute and that abortion must be allowed and accessible to all women choosing to terminate their pregnancy;
- the Parliamentary Assembly of Europe Council adopted in 2008 the *1608 Resolution* for the right to access to safe and legal abortion in Europe;
- Liberals and Radicals defend the right of women to have a law that allows them time to make their own decisions during the first weeks of pregnancy;

Recognizing that

- prevention and education can avoid unwanted pregnancies (as well as STDs);
- abortion is not a common method of contraception but an exceptional measure and the last of the possible options;

Noting that

- women are forced to practice abortion clandestinely in many countries;
- Spain had its first law on abortion in 1985 which made clear that abortion was a crime, although contemplated three possible cases in which a abortion was possible: violation (during the first 12 weeks of pregnancy), fetal malformation (up week 22) and health risk to the mother;
- this law was replaced in 2010 by a more progressive law that recognized abortion as a fundamental right of women: a woman could abort until week 14 without any justified reason, physical or mental, understanding that it was their responsibility to make such decision and until 22 weeks if there is any risk for the mother's health or of the fetus (and thereafter allows it only if the fetus suffers from extremely severe disease or abnormalities);
- the Popular Party (conservatives) presented an appeal to the Spanish Constitutional Court, which has yet to pronounce on the matter, while by anticipation of the positioning of the Court, the Spanish Minister of Justice Gallardón worked on a new law based on the 1985 law to penalize abortion during the first weeks of pregnancy;
- Spain would back up 30 years with respect to the rights and freedoms of women because the Act of 2010 has allowed many women

practice abortion on better terms than they did in the framework of the law of 85;

- the European Parliament missed, despite a thin majority in its favor after the vote corrections, to recognize the right to safe access to abortion through an own-initiative report ;

IFLRY calls upon

- ALDE groups in the European Parliament and in the Council of Europe to make this right effective in all their states members;
- UN Nations to officially adopt the recommendations on abortion of the *Note A/66/254* presented by the General Secretary in August 2011 for an interim report;

IFLRY asks to all Governments

- free access to abortion until the 18th week and access beyond this term in cases of fetal malformation or threat to the mother ;
- free access to minors and psychological support to ensure that the minor's decision is notified to the parents, and therefore for her to feel supported by the family in this unpleasant process
- easy access to contraceptives for all citizens, especially young people with less economic resources ;
- measures to ensure that the information reaches all teenagers and that public offices are located throughout the country are available for youth support.
- measures enhancing education of sexual conducts in schools with sufficient budget measures promoting responsibility in the exercise of sexuality

IFLRY urges

- all Liberals and Radicals to fight for this right in the countries where it is not recognized or effective;
- all Liberals and Radicals to organize and to participate to protests for this right if governments want, as in Spain, to reduce it by reactionary legal arsenal.