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**TEENAGER SENT TO CHILD PRISON COLONY**

**BELARUS: MIKITA ZALATAROU**

Teenager, Mikita Zalatarou, was waiting for a bus in the main square of Homel in Belarus. Nearby, a largely peaceful protest about the results of the recent presidential election was taking place.

Police moved in on the protest and the crowd started to run. Someone advised Mikita to do the same, and so he took their advice and ran too.

**In Belarus there were months of protest following the widely disputed Presidential election in August 2020.**

**The government response was a shocking clampdown on dissent and protest, with many different sectors of society suffering human rights violations.**

**Amnesty has reported on the impact of the crackdown on human rights in Belarus, including a report on the impact on children’s rights, available at:** [**https://www.amnesty.org/en/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/belarus-crackdown-on-children\_web.pdf**](https://www.amnesty.org/en/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/belarus-crackdown-on-children_web.pdf%20)

The next day police officers came to Mikita’s house and arrested him. They accused him of throwing a Molotov cocktail at two officers the night before. Mikita was beaten with an electric-shock truncheon and interrogated without a lawyer of responsible adult present. He was in pre-trial detention for six months.

There was no video evidence of Mikita being involved in any violence and media reports of the demonstration did not mention mass unrest at all. However, the judge still convicted Mikita of mass disorder and using illegal explosives and sentenced him to 5 years in a child educational prison colony.

**TAKE ACTION:**

**Write to the Prosecutor General urging him to release Mikita Zalatarou, pending a fair retrial.**

**You can also send a message of support and solidarity to Mikita Zalatorou as part of the** [**Write for Rights campaign**](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/files/2021-10/Write%20for%20Rights%20Booklet%202021.pdf?VersionId=VCT8OFbpKGiv6VjrtsY5nOCEk1QgGHVG)**.**

**TEMPLATE LETTER**

Andrei Shved

Prosecutor General of the Republic of Belarus

Internatsionalnaya Str. 22

220030 Minsk

Belarus

info@prokuratura.gov.by

Dear Prosecutor General,

I am writing to express my concern at the arrest, ill-treatment and imprisonment of Mikita Zalatarou.

Mikita Zalatarou was waiting on the streets in Homel when protestors ran away from a protest taking place nearby. The following day Mikita Zalatarou was arrested, accused of throwing a Molotov cocktail, and reportedly beaten, electrocuted and interrogated without a lawyer or responsible adult present. Despite no evidence showing Mikita had been involved in any violence, he was convicted and sentenced to five years imprisonment.

I urge you to ensure that Mikita Zalatarou is released, pending a fair retrial that complies with international juvenile justice standards.

Yours sincerely,

**SOLIDARITY ACTION**

**You can send Mikita Zalatarou a message of solidarity as part of the Write for Rights Campaign.**

***Language:* English or Russian**

***Send your message to:***

**Educational Colony V.K – 2**

**Batova 4**

**Bobruisk**

**213800 Mogilevskaya Obl.**

**Belarus**

***Please don’t send a religious card, send an Amnesty card or mention Amnesty.***