

Sender:

Germany

Generalstaatsanwalt der Republik Belarus
Andrei Shved
Ul. Internatsiyanalnaya 22
220030 Minsk
BELARUS

Hamburg, 12th March 2023

Human Right Activist Anastasia Loika

Dear Prosecutor General,

I am extremely concerned about the arbitrary criminal prosecution and detention of human rights defender and prisoner of conscience Nasta (Anastasia) Loika and reports of torture and other ill-treatment.

On 28 October 2022, Nasta Loika was arbitrarily arrested in Minsk and given 15 days of detention on 31 October, under the false accusation of "petty hooliganism" (Article 19.1 of the Code of Administrative Offences). However, she was not immediately released after serving her sentence and given four additional 15-day terms in detention for the same purported offence. On 24 December 2022, she was arbitrarily charged under Articles 342.1 and 130.3 of the Criminal Code. Nasta Loika reported that while in detention she had been tortured by electric shock during questioning and that she was left for eight hours in the courtyard outside without outerwear. She is consistently not being provided with required medical help, which in itself may amount to inhumane and degrading treatment.

Nasta Loika has committed no crime and is being relentlessly targeted by the authorities in retaliation for her human rights work.

I urge you to ensure Nasta Loika's immediate and unconditional release and end the misuse of the criminal justice system to target her and other human rights defenders in Belarus. Please instigate an immediate investigation into the allegations of Nasta Loika's torture and other ill-treatment, and into her arbitrary detention and prosecution, and suspend any officials who may be reasonably suspected of respective violations.

Yours sincerely,

[name and signature]