

URGENT ACTION

ZMITSER DASHKEVICH RELEASED AFTER SENTENCE

Belarusian prisoner of conscience Zmitser Dashkevich has been released from prison this morning after serving his full sentence. He has said he feels good and is ready to continue his political activities, and thanked everyone who gave him support.

Zmitser Dashkevich, a prominent activist and leader of the democratic youth organization Young Front (Malady Front) was released early in the morning of 28 August. He had served his full sentence. He will be under preventive supervision for six months, during which he cannot leave his home from 8pm to 6am and will need to ask police for permission to travel outside his home city or abroad. After his release, he has been able to rejoin his wife, Anastasiya, whom he married in the prison colony in Hrodna on 26 December 2012.

Zmitser Dashkevich had been sentenced to two years in a labour colony on 24 March 2011 for an assault, under article 339 (“hooliganism”), supposedly committed on 18 December 2010, the day before the Belarusian presidential election. He was due to be released in December 2012, but was sentenced to a further year in prison in August 2012 for allegedly violating prison rules under article 411 of the Criminal Code (“deliberate disobedience to the correctional institution administration”). Amnesty International considered him a prisoner of conscience and believes the charges against him were fabricated to stop him taking part in a demonstration against alleged election rigging.

Zmitser Dashkevich was detained with fellow Young Front activist Eduard Lobau, who was sentenced to four years in prison on 24 March 2011. Mykalau Statkevich was sentenced to six years on 26 May 2011 and Pavel Sevyarynets was sentenced to three years on 16 May 2011 also in connection to the December 2010 demonstration. Amnesty International considers them prisoners of conscience and is calling for their immediate and unconditional release.

No further action is requested from the UA network. Many thanks to all who sent appeals.

Name: Zmitser Dashkevich
Gender m/f: m

This is the third update of UA 217/12. Further information: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/EUR49/017/2012/en>

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