

Association of Regional Press Publishers

“United Massmedia”

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Baranavichy,

Belarus



13 August 2020

Statement by United MassMedia

The Belarusian community of professional journalists, editors and publishers would like to draw your attention to recent events in Belarus. Throughout the 2020 presidential campaign, the principles of free speech, transparency and free and fair elections have been flagrantly violated. Since the election day, Sunday, 9 August, more than 5,000 people have been illegally detained, beaten and otherwise abused by riot police and law enforcement agencies. There have been confirmed cases of live ammunition fired at peaceful protestors.

We, the publishers of the regional press in Belarus, are concerned with the fate not only of our employees, but also of our readers, the Belarusian population which has been living on the brink of civil war since the presidential election.

We call on the Belarusian authorities to immediately cease the violence against journalists and all peaceful protestors.

We demand the immediate release of all journalists and all others who have been illegally detained.

We demand the identification and prosecution of those responsible for human rights violations.

We urge the global community to condemn the violence against protestors and to support the rights of Belarusians to a free press, free expression, and free and fair elections.

A continually updated list of detained journalists can be found on the website of the Belarusian Association of Journalists:

<https://baj.by/be/analytics/represii-suprac-zhurnalistau-u-belarusi-u-2020-godze-tablica-abnaulyaecca>

About the Association: United MassMedia, founded in 2009, today unites 15 independent media, both online and printed, from different regions of Belarus. The total circulation of print publications by association members exceeds 70,000 copies. The association’s main goal is the development of an environment favourable to independent media.

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