



## Zmister Bandarenka Belarus

Mr. Bandarenka is a journalist, civil society leader, and member of the political opposition in Belarus. Authorities arrested Mr. Bandarenka during the post election crackdown in December 2010. On April 27, 2011, a Minsk court sentenced Mr. Bandarenka to two years' imprisonment on charges of organizing and participating in a breach of public order. The government pardoned Mr. Bandarenka on April 15, 2012.

During the 2010 presidential elections, Mr. Bandarenka served as a primary advisor to opposition presidential candidate Andrei Sannikov. After the presidential polls closed on December 19, 2010, tens of thousands of Belarusian citizens gathered to demonstrate in downtown Minsk. After a small group of unknown individuals away from the main crowd attempted to enter a government building, police violently dispersed the demonstration, severely beating many people and arresting over 700, including six of the seven opposition candidates.

Police arrested Mr. Bandarenka on December 20, 2010 at his home in Minsk. Charged under Article 342 with organizing or participating in actions that breach the public order, the judge sentenced Mr. Bandarenka to two years in prison on April 27, 2011.

While in detention, Mr. Bandarenka experienced a serious injury to his spinal cord, later determined to be a number of herniated intervertebral disks and spinal nerve entrapments. However, for five months the Belarusian State Security Agency (KGB) did not allow Mr. Bandarenka to meet with a specialist. Although the Interior Affairs Ministry finally allowed him to meet with a neurologist—who diagnosed the problem and indicated that Mr. Bandarenka urgently needed surgery—he did not undergo surgery until an international outcry over his treatment. Despite a surgery on July 26, 2011, Mr. Bandarenka's health continued to deteriorate in prison.

Mr. Bandarenka was pardoned on April 15, 2012, after nearly 16 months in detention. He continues to have medical problems as a result of his imprisonment.