



# Movimento Nonviolento

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Sezione italiana della W.R.I. (War Resisters International - Internazionale dei Resistenti alla Guerra)

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## URGENT APPEAL

To: Lithuanian Immigration authorities

E-mail: info@migracija.gov.lt

Subject: Ivan STRASHKEVICH case, gim 1993-09-01, urgent release

Dear Sir/Madam,

On behalf of the Movimento Nonviolento (Italy),

we are writing to you to express our grave concern about the case of Ivan STRASHKEVICH, an ethnic Lithuanian (gim 1993-09-01).

It has come to our attention that an extension to the work visa of the above citizen of Belarus was refused on 5th June 2023, on the grounds that he had previously served as a border guard in the Belarussian army. At the same time he was served by the Lithuanian authorities with a 60 month ban on entry to the European Union. When he subsequently applied for asylum, he was detained during the interview and forcibly transferred to the refugee camp at Pabrade, where he was placed in solitary confinement with access to a phone for only thirty minutes a day – even that not guaranteed. This despite the fact that he has a valid residence permit for Poland which has not been revoked.

Movimento Nonviolento have no doubt as to the bona fides of Strashkevich, who left the border service in 2019 and subsequently actively supported the protests following the disputed 2020 election and contributed to a documentary film critical of the border service's handling of the 2021 migrant inflow. But in any case his asylum appeal ought to be allowed to run its course following due process without subjecting him to multiple human rights violations.

We call upon the immigration authorities to restore Strashkevitch's links with the outside world, reconsider the necessity of his conditions of detention and allow him to pursue his application for asylum, which would enjoy our support, without hindrance.

Moreover, even in the event that the application is turned down, we call upon the authorities to revoke the ban on his entry to the European Union, which has no rational justification. More generally, Movimento Nonviolento urgently appeal to the Lithuanian authorities that Belarus should not be considered a safe country for return, especially for those who have already been identified as opponents of the regime; that they revise their view of the significance of former military service in Belarus, recognising those who wish to avoid mobilisation as the conscientious objectors they now are; that they refrain in all cases from deporting such persons to Belarus, that they give favourable consideration to applications for asylum; and that failing this they agree to issue the objectors with the necessary residence and work permits enabling them to remain in Lithuania and the EU.

Thank you in advance for your kind attention and careful consideration.

Sincerely yours,

**Mao Valpiana**  
President  
Verona, 4 July 2023