



Transforming Belarus: Ways Ahead

Part of the Debate Series "Listening to Citizens in Countries of the Eastern Partnership"

Wednesday, December 7, 2011

2:00 to 5:30 p.m.

Carnegie Europe, Rue du Congrès 15, Brussels

- Agenda -

14:00 – 14:15 OPENING REMARKS

Jan Techau, Director, Carnegie Europe

Aliaksei Pikulik, Academic Director, Belarusian Institute for Strategic Studies

Olga Stuzhinskaya, Director, Office for a Democratic Belarus – Brussels

14:15 – 15:00 KEYNOTE PRESENTATIONS

Speakers: **Štefan Füle**, Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighborhood Policy

Pavel Daneyko, Director, Belarusian Economic Research and Outreach Centre (BEROC), Belarus

Moderator: **Jan Techau**, Director, Carnegie Europe

15:00 – 16:00 PANEL 1:

BELARUS BETWEEN THE EURASIAN UNION AND THE EUROPEAN UNION: CHOICE OF AN INTEGRATION PROJECT

Belarus is facing a historical choice that will determine the path of its evolution: it could become part of Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin's "Eurasian Union", or the country and its people might in time pursue integration with Europe. So far, Belarus' position has been to remain firmly in the middle of these two options.

What strategy should the European Union adopt to win the hearts and minds of the Belarusian people? What implications do Putin's attempts to build a new political entity from the ruins of the former Soviet Union hold for Belarus? What effects have Eastern Partnership and EU policy efforts had on Belarus? How do Belarusians and their government perceive these efforts?

Speakers: **Dzianis Melyantsou**, Senior Expert, Belarusian Institute for Strategic Studies (BISS)

Alex Nice, Chatham House, Coordinator, Russia and Eurasia Programme, Chatham House

Arkady Moshes, Senior Researcher, Finnish Institute for International Affairs

Moderator: **Balazs Jarabik**, Country Director for Belarus and Ukraine, Pact; and Associate Fellow, FRIDE

16:00 – 16:15 COFFEE BREAK

16:15 – 17:15 **PANEL 2:**

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL EFFECTS OF THE ECONOMIC CRISIS

In spring 2011 Belarus was hit by a fully-fledged economic crisis, caused by a negative balance of trade, declining confidence in the Belarusian ruble, and decreasing external subsidies. This crisis undermined Belarus' expanded social sector and the country's command economy.

What is the route out of this crisis? What strategic development and reform programs are possible in the current political climate? What kind of economy does Belarus want following such reforms? By what means can the state compensate those who will be adversely affected by these reforms, while simultaneously preventing the abuse of power by those who will reap their benefits?

Speakers: **Aliaksei Pikulik**, Academic Director, Belarusian Institute for Strategic Studies (BISS)

Alexander Chubrik, Director, Research Centre for the Institute for Privatization and Management (IMP)

Dzmitry Kruk, Belarusian Economic Research and Outreach Centre (BEROC)

Andrei Vardamatski, Director, Research Laboratory NOVAK

Moderator: **Olga Shumylo-Tapiola**, Visiting Scholar, Carnegie Europe

17:15 – 17:30 **CONCLUDING REMARKS** by **ODB/BISS**

17:30 – 18:30 **COCKTAIL RECEPTION**