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BELARUS

## Maria Kolesnikowa

Dear Prosecutor General,

I am very concerned about the health and safety of the prisoner of conscience **Maria Kolesnikowa** and demand her immediate and unconditional release.

Following surgery for a perforated ulcer, the prison administration forced her to resume work in the colony's clothing factory. Prior to being admitted to the hospital, Maria Kolesnikowa had spent over 10 days in a freezing punishment isolation cell, her cell was so cold that she could not sleep and constantly walked to keep warm. Transfer to a hospital became necessary after a serious deterioration in her health. Her family and lawyer were not informed about this life-threatening deterioration in her condition.

Since mid-February, Maria Kolesnikowa has been denied any communication with her family (including calls, letters, or visits) while her lawyer has been unlawfully refused access to her since 7 February, despite repeated attempts to contact her.

I urge you to:

- Ensure Maria Kolesnikowa's is immediately and unconditionally released.
- To end her ill-treatment and incommunicado detention.
- Provide her with adequate health care and all essential medicines.
- To promptly and effectively investigate the allegations of ill-treatment, arbitrary detention and unfounded prosecution, and to bring those responsible to account, in a fair trial.
- End the misuse of the criminal justice system to target activists and peaceful dissent.

Yours sincerely,