

Press release:

# HOCKEY FEDERATION TURNS BLIND EYE TO HUMAN RIGHTS BY CONFIRMING 2014 CHAMPIONSHIPS IN BELARUS

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**19 May 2012** We, eight human rights organisations in the Czech Republic, Germany, Norway, Slovakia, Sweden and Switzerland are deeply disappointed that the International Ice Hockey Federation confirmed today at its general assembly in Helsinki that the Republic of Belarus will host the 2014 IIHF World Championship.

[Se our campaign web-page here.](#)

Belarus finds itself in the most alarming human rights crisis since the country became an independent state in 1991. We believe that to hold the 2014 IIHF World Championship in Belarus would support and legitimize a regime that violates the human rights of the people of Belarus in an alarming way.

Therefore we will continue our campaign "Don't play with the dictator" until the IIHF revokes its decision to hold the Ice Hockey World Championship 2014 in Belarus. Our campaign is reinforced by recent support from all over the world, including from CIVICUS, Freedom House, the World Alliance for Citizen Participation (South Africa) and several members of parliament in Europe. For updates on our campaign, please visit [www.minsk2014.no](http://www.minsk2014.no)

Olle Schmidt, Swedish member of the European Parliament recently joined our campaign, saying "Europe's last dictator was given the honor of hosting the Ice Hockey World Championship in 2014. The sporting world also must realize what this looks like – should it allow the hockey's reputation getting tarnished by this unabashed backing for a dictator who is responsible for the execution of young people after summary trials?"

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