

12 August 2020

Belarus: Detained human rights defender Kryscina Vitushka in need of urgent medical attention

On 10 August 2020, Kryscina Vitushka and her husband, Andrey Vitushka, were detained near Centralny district police station in Minsk while inquiring about the whereabouts of their son, who has been missing since 9 August 2020. **Kryscina Vitushka** is diabetic and is currently being deprived of vital medication and, as a result, is in need of urgent medical attention.

[Kryscina Vitushka](#) is a cultural rights defender, advocating for the right of children to be educated in the Belarusian language. She is also a pro-democracy activist.

On 10 August 2020, Kryscina Vitushka and her husband Andrey Vitushka were detained near Centralny district police station in Minsk while seeking information about the whereabouts of their 16-year-old son, Miron Vitushka. The couple believe he may have been detained on 9 August 2020, during the protests in response to the announcement of the results of the presidential election in Belarus.

On 11 August 2020, Kryscina Vitushka's lawyer attempted to bring her medication to the detention facility where she was believed to be held, however the prison officers denied that she was detained there. Family members of Kryscina Vitushka also tried to bring medication to several detention facilities where she might be detained, but they were also told by the authorities at those facilities that she was not among the detainees.

Finally, the defender's lawyer managed to confirm that she was being detained in a temporary detention facility on Akrestsina Street in Minsk. Her lawyer also lodged a complaint to the court of Centralny district of Minsk against her administrative detention, stating that according to the second part of Article 6.7 of the Administrative Code, the mother of a minor child cannot be administratively detained. The lawyer also stressed that she urgently be given access to insulin.

Front Line Defenders received troubling information regarding the detention facility on Akrestsina Street where Kryscina Vitushka is being held, including reports of ill-treatment, inhumane conditions and overcrowding. Front Line Defenders is fearful of the risks to the defender's physical and psychological integrity.

Front Line Defenders fears that Kryscina Vitushka's health and life may be in danger in detention, as she urgently needs her medication as a diabetic, and believes that she should be immediately released.

Front Line Defenders urges the authorities in Belarus to:

1. Immediately and unconditionally release Kryscina Vitushka as Front Line Defenders believes she has been detained solely as a result of her peaceful and legitimate human rights work;
2. Immediately provide Kryscina Vitushka with the medication she critically requires as a diabetic, as well as any other medical treatment she requires;

3. Ensure that the treatment of Kryscina Vitushka, while in detention, adheres to the conditions set out in the 'Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment', adopted by UN General Assembly resolution 43/173 of 9 December 1988;
4. Inform the family and lawyer of Kryscina Vitushka of the place of her detention, and allow them immediate and unfettered access to her;
5. Guarantee in all circumstances that all human rights defenders in Belarus are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions.