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Signs of Change in Belarus: Has the Countdown for
Lukashenka Begun?

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A large, stylized globe graphic in a light tan color, showing the outlines of continents and a grid of latitude and longitude lines. It is positioned in the lower half of the page, partially overlapping the orange background.

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Key Findings

- Significant recent changes in both Belarus's domestic and foreign policy might erode the position of President Alexander Lukashenka in the longer term.
- Belarus has started the process of domestic economic liberalisation and there has been an important redistribution of power from the old 'siloviki' ruling group to the new 'technocrats' power group.
- Russian's relations with Belarus remain strong, but relations with Lukashenka have worsened. Lukashenka is trying to search for a more independent position from Russia by reaching out more strongly to the West.
- Lukashenka is still firmly in power. Belarus is not likely to go through a power transition during the next presidential elections in 2011.
- The most likely successor for Lukashenka is his eldest son Viktor. He already holds a senior position in the presidential administration and he has been preparing the way forward in many state institutions.

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INTRODUCTION

Since 1994 Alexander Lukashenka has governed Belarus with an iron hand. The West has distanced itself from his regime, but Russia's support has helped him to maintain power. Lukashenka continues to enjoy firm support from the population although the opposition has been ruthlessly silenced and thus the country has not had any real alternative to his absolutist rule. Nevertheless, recent events suggest that the situation might be changing for Belarus and Lukashenka. This paper discusses changes in both Belarus's domestic and foreign positions and their impact on Lukashenka's regime. Will Lukashenka continue to stay in power after the end of his third term or will there be a transformation of power in 2011 when the next presidential elections are due to take place? If so, will the power be kept in the Lukashenka family given that his eldest son Viktor is often suggested as his most likely successor?

DOMESTIC POLICY/ BELARUSIAN SOCIETY

Important changes are taking place in Belarus. There has been movement towards greater economic reform, which could also change the distribution of power in society.

Firstly, Belarus has been forced to reform its economic system to attract western capital to better manage a more challenging financial situation in the face of the prospect of less Russian assistance. Since the break up of the USSR, the Belarusian economy has retained many of the features of the old Soviet command economy. In 2008 Belarus nevertheless made significant steps towards economic liberalisation. These included decisions on the denationalisation and privatisation

of state-owned property. The state has also begun for the first time to cooperate with domestic business to find better ways to liberalise conditions for the economy.¹

Belarusian reforms have been recognised internationally. In its 2009 'Doing Business' report the World Bank named Belarus in the top ten reformers for facilitating business and called the country: "a global leader in regulatory reforms to make doing business easier". Craig Bell, the World Bank Group Representative in Belarus said that: "this year's impressive Doing Business results by Belarus are a reflection of the government's commitment and hard work to improve the business and investment climate." The report congratulated Belarus for facilitating the starting of businesses in several ways, such as making registration and permission processes easier and faster and easing and simplifying the tax system.²

The IMF, from whom Belarus requested a \$2.5 billion loan in 2009, has also expressed its satisfaction with Minsk's economic reforms. The IMF granted and paid for the initial purchase of the loan in January and granted an augmentation of nearly \$1 billion in June as the IMF officials were happy with the improvement the government had shown in its economic policy. The IMF was particularly impressed with the plan for economic liberalisation. The plan puts forward significant measures such as an enactment of a privatisation law and the establishment of a privatisation agency. The independence of the central bank will also be increased and further price and wage controls reduced. In addition, mandatory production and employment targets for private companies will be removed.³

Secondly, Belarus's ruling group has changed. The old elite, the so called 'siloviki', who were crucial to Lukashenka's survival during the 2006 mass protests, have lost their position to a new, younger and pragmatic group known as the 'technocrats'. This group is close to Viktor Lukashenka and the Prime Minister Syarhey Sidorski.⁴

The siloviki have gradually lost important positions in all the central institutions. Allies of former State Secretary of the Security Council Viktor Sheyman have been removed from the following bodies over 2007-2008: the State Control Committee (March 2007), KGB (July 2007), Prosecutor's Office (February and November 2007) and Security Council and the Presidential Administration (July 2008). The most visible and discussed changes have been the removal of powerful security officers from the KGB and the Security Council. KGB chief Stsyapan Sukharenka was sacked in July 2007 along with his first deputy Vasil Dzemyantsey. Both were

involved in serious disputes with Viktor Lukashenka and both were allies of siloviki leader and Security Council chief Viktor Sheyman.⁵

Sheyman himself was removed a year later when a bombing incident at an independence day concert gave Lukashenka the perfect excuse to remove him and his ally, the head of presidential administration Henadz Nyavyhlas. The former was replaced by Yury Zhadobin and the latter by Uladzimir Matei, both confidantes of Viktor Lukashenka. Sheyman's removal especially provoked discussion as he had been part of Lukashenka's inner circle from the beginning of his presidency in 1994 and was said to be the number two man in Belarus. His removal was seen as a significant step in the process of getting rid of the old group of power holders. Minister of Interior Uladzimir Navumau, whose resignation Lukashenka accepted in April 2009, was said to be the last of the old group holding high office.⁶

The partial removal of the siloviki from positions of power is a significant political change in Belarus.⁷ The siloviki were representative of an authoritarian Soviet-type worldview. Those removed shared a dubious past in the fierce repression of the opposition including the violent disappearances of Lukashenka's adversaries. Siloviki domination of the political system made political and economic reform impossible.

After the redistribution of power, the role of the security and controlling agencies has decreased and there has been some diminution in the role of fear as an instrument of controlling Belarusian society. Compared to the pro-Russian siloviki, the technocrats can be described as "post-Soviet," rather than "Soviet" individuals. That does not make them better, but it does make them different from those who came before. They do not view Lenin and Stalin as symbols of the nation. Nor do they consider Moscow the center of the universe or socialism the shining light of humanity's future."⁸ The emergence of the technocrats will not result in democracy or far-reaching liberalisation in Belarus, but their rise to power is a sign of change.

This domestic transformation process of changing economic structures and redistribution of power has not yet weakened Lukashenka's power. The technocrats are loyal to Lukashenka. Still, the longer term implications of the ongoing transformation should not be underestimated. At the very least, Lukashenka will increasingly have to take into account the interests of this new elite, whose position will be strengthened in the future as they will be the main beneficiaries of privatisation. This will be a new situation for Lukashenka as he has never

previously had to worry seriously about taking into account the interests of reformist lobbies.

The strengthening roles of other actors such as the head of Government (Prime Minister), National Bank and Presidential Administration may also erode Lukashenka's domination of the political system.⁹ An October 2008 poll by the Independent Institute of Socio-Economic and Political Studies (IISEPS) showed that for the first time public confidence in the president and the government was about equal at 50.6 percent and 50.1 percent, respectively. In the past, the president has always enjoyed more support than the government. This change can be interpreted as a support for the new economic policy which is identified more with Sidorsky and the technocrats than with Lukashenka who has been a strong supporter of state intervention in the economy.¹⁰

In sum, although it is unlikely that there will be a sudden change of power in Belarus, the ongoing change in Belarusian society is likely to alter Lukashenka's regime in the long term. This process is altering not just the ruling group but also the structures of society. Although Lukashenka is still firmly in power it is likely that he will have to make some changes in order to adjust to this new era.

VIKTAR LUKASHENKA AS AN HEIR?

Lukashenka, 55, has run Belarus for 15 years and today is not faced with any serious challengers. He has expressed his intention to stay in power for a long time and believes that he draws his power from God. He is certain that he is the best possible leader for Belarus. He has also publicly stated that his two eldest sons are weaker than him and will not be suitable to be his heirs. In public he has reserved the role of heir for his youngest illegitimate son Nikolai.¹¹ According to Lukashenka his youngest son is perfect for the job. He has taken Nikolai or "Kolja" on official state visits to Russia and the Vatican. Kolja has also been seen in identical uniform to his father, meeting generals who were obliged to salute the little boy.¹²

In spite of these self-assured statements, it seems that even Lukashenka himself may not fully believe that he can stay in power until his youngest son is ready to take the lead. Lukashenka's faces a difficult task in trying to ensure support from the West, Russia and the new elite. The financial crisis will also put even more pressure on Lukashenka as his popularity is strongly based on economic prosperity

and 2009 is turning out to be a difficult year for Belarus. It will face a 4.3 per cent decrease in real GDP,¹³ and may have to devalue the rouble again.¹⁴

Lukashenka might be beginning to realise that the pressures on him might soon become too great. In April 2008, in a statement to the Belarusian parliament, Lukashenka referred to his retirement by saying that he will not join any party after leaving from the presidency. There were some rumors after the presidential elections of 2006 that Lukashenka had had a stroke or a heart attack as he was not seen in public for a while. The steady promotion of his eldest son Viktor to senior positions in his administration suggests that Lukashenka is indeed not as secure as he tries to claim and that he thinks more of his oldest son than he publicly admits.

Although Lukashenka has said that he has never pulled any strings for his sons and has undermined Viktor publicly, Viktor's career certainly tells another story. Viktor studied Economics at the International Relations Faculty of the Belarus State University. During his career, Viktor has served in the border troops, and worked in the Foreign Ministry and at the Agat state military research and production association. In 2006 Aleksandr Lukashenka promoted Viktor as presidential aide on national security and a year later gave the then 31 year old Viktor a position on the Belarusian Security Council. Until then the Security Council had not had a presidential aide as a member. In addition, the promotion took place during the gas disputes with Russia and was thus seen as Lukashenka's message to Moscow that he has a successor closely linked to him.¹⁵ In sum, Viktor holds significant power in Belarusian society and Lukashenka is said to trust no-one but his son. Lukashenka has said that Viktor is his main adviser on economic and other issues.¹⁶

The recent changes of personnel have also guaranteed that Viktor has confidantes in all the important positions of the Government. It seems that Lukashenka is creating a situation where the only possible successor for himself is Viktor. It is possible that Lukashenka is planning to hand over power to Viktor at some stage. In 2011, the year of the next presidential election in Belarus, Viktor will turn 35, the youngest possible age for a presidential candidate according to the Belarusian constitution. At that point Lukashenka will have had ruled the country for 17 years. Nevertheless, it seems that Lukashenka might not be ready to give up power in 2011. He has determinedly tried to adjust to the new situation outlined above even by hiring the British PR guru Lord Timothy Bell, who helped Margaret Thatcher to

improve her public image.¹⁷ These are not the actions of a man who is ready to give up power just yet.

But the recent years have taken their toll on Lukashenka. By creating such a strong position for Viktor he has guaranteed that he will be able to transfer power to his eldest son relatively quickly if his position becomes too difficult or his health deteriorates. Even though it seems that he might run for a fourth presidency, it appears likely that he will not serve the entire term. Viktor's presidency would guarantee a nice retirement for him and would keep power in the family. For Lukashenka, a man not known for having a reasonable disposition, the grand plan might be a chain of Lukashenkas; power passing from him to Viktor and eventually to his youngest son, Nikolai.

FOREIGN POLICY

Belarusian relations with Russia have stayed extremely close throughout the post-Soviet era. According to Lukashenka's own description, Russia and Belarus are in fact one nation rather than two separate ones. For Russia, Belarus is an important ally and outpost against the West, and for Belarus, Russia has been an irreplaceable supporter economically, politically and militarily. Economically the Belarusian regime could be described as "sponsored authoritarianism",¹⁸ as Russia has been a vital supporter of Belarus' economy, by subsidising it with cheap energy and facilitating the access for Belarusian exports to Russian markets. Politically, Russia has been a reliable partner in comparison to the West, which has expressed disapproval of Lukashenka's authoritarianism. Militarily, Belarus is dependent on Russian material and technical support. The most recent step towards strengthening cooperation was the signing of Joint Regional Air Defence System in February 2009.

Nevertheless, since the end of 2006 relations between Belarus and Russia have gradually deteriorated and have now achieved a new low point that can be even described even as a "cold war" between the countries. This worsening of relations was started by Russia's decision to gradually start charging Belarus the market price for gas. Russia has begun to make its economic support more conditional and use its economic power more robustly as a tool to achieve its goals.¹⁹ For example, in 2009 Russia postponed a \$500 million stabilisation loan and temporarily banned access for Belarusian milk products to Russian markets.

For Lukashenka, Russia's new policy line has been unacceptable and he has tried to fight back to the maximum extent possible. The most visible demonstration was his sudden refusal to attend the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) meeting in Moscow in June 2009. By refusing to go, he was trying to block the development of CSTO's collective rapid deployment forces which are commonly perceived as Russia's counterbalance to NATO. By doing this, Belarus tried to delegitimise the decisions made in the summit concerning enlargement of the size of these forces, the scope of their missions, and the legal basis of their operations.²⁰ According to a Belarusian official "it would be but a mockery of common sense to attempt to combine the resolute steps to create military mechanisms for ensuring collective security with trade wars between the Organisation's member states."²¹

In the course of this political game with Moscow, Lukashenka has also started to search for a new direction for Belarusian foreign policy. A cornerstone of this new direction is to emphasise strongly the sovereignty and independence of Belarus. He stated that, "we are an independent country, and we will do whatever meets our interests...There must be no begging. If Russia does not have the \$500 million it promised us long ago, you must not beg for the money."²² Lukashenka is trying to show Russia that its assistance is not indispensable and he will allow neither himself nor Belarus to be treated as a pawn by Moscow.

To back up these defiant statements he has begun to search for western alternatives to Russian assistance. This has forced the Belarusian leadership to make some political concessions such as freeing political prisoners, relaxing control over the media and letting the opposition work more freely. Consequently, the EU has promised economic assistance to the country, lifted some of the visa bans on Belarusian officials and included Belarus in the Eastern Partnership Project (EPP). In conjunction with this, there seems to be a thaw in the US-Belarus relations although there is still no US ambassador in Belarus and economic sanctions are still in place. Nevertheless, the US sent its highest delegation to the country in ten years when a congressional delegation visited Belarus at the end of June 2009.

It remains to be seen how this new line of policy will affect Lukashenka's own position and his authoritarian regime in the long run. At first glance, it seems that the new policy will strengthen rather than significantly undermine his position. The country now has more alternatives to Russian assistance. However, although some concessions have been made towards the West, the authoritarian aspect of the

regime is also not likely to diminish. True democratisation is not happening. The political liberalisation of Belarus is a commodity which Lukashenka believes he can sell to the West. Minsk's concessions are aimed at improving relations with the West but not at pushing through any real changes in the regime.²³

Nevertheless, Lukashenka's position might become more difficult in the long run. Belarus is still highly dependent on Russia. The relationship between the countries is far from equal in spite of Lukashenka's wishes, and in the recent political game, Russia remains the winner. Although Russia has not been able to achieve all its goals, in particular the recognition for Abkhazia and South Ossetia, it has managed to gain victories such as the signing of the agreement establishing the Joint Regional Air Defence System. Russian air force commander, General Alexander Zelin, stated that the treaty will be an important part of Russia's missile defence strategy.²⁴ In short, Russia's relations to Belarus remain strong although relations with Lukashenka have worsened. As one high-ranking official of Medvedev's Administration said to *Kommersant*, "we're not particularly upset with Belarus's conduct...Very simply, it looks like someone's grown tired of being president in that country."²⁵ Although Lukashenka wants to see himself as an equal partner to Putin and Medvedev, for Moscow this is an extreme overestimation. Lukashenka may not be as irreplaceable as he thinks.

There may also be limits to the degree of cooperation Belarus can expect to have with the West. Although some argue that the West must not lose this opportunity to drag Belarus further from Russia's sphere of influence,²⁶ it still seems extremely difficult for many western leaders to engage deeply with Lukashenka. This was illustrated in the EPP meeting in Prague in May 2009 as Lukashenka's possible involvement made many of the EU member state leaders cancel their participation.²⁷ Lukashenka's position thus does not look very secure from a Western point of view either; it seems impossible for Lukashenka to carry out the real changes the West demands to his political regime without losing his power. For the West, it is impossible to have better cooperation with Belarus without these changes.

In sum, it can be expected that Lukashenka's "schizophrenic" position, balancing the West and Russia, will continue. Although this new position has been beneficial for Belarus in some ways it will also put more pressure on Lukashenka. He is not accepted in the West and his popularity has drastically fallen away in Moscow. This

position might at some point become too uncomfortable even to such a skilful political player as Lukashenka.

CONCLUSION

Lukashenka is still firmly in power in Belarus. The recent changes in foreign and domestic policy have not been able to undermine his position in any significant way. Nevertheless, the long term implications of these changes are yet to be seen. Lukashenka's balancing act between the West and Russia is not an easy one to maintain and may become impossible at some point. He has lost Moscow's support which has been vital for him in the past but has not been able to gain true acceptance from the West in spite of the recent thaw in relations. In addition to this decreasing support from outside, domestic change has to a certain extent altered the structures of society and redistributed a measure of power to other actors.

These changes will inevitably affect Lukashenka's position and his regime, although so far he has managed to adjust to the new situation quite well. Nevertheless, he has clearly started to put the wheels in motion, attempting to ensure that power will stay in the family if the pressures grow too great or his health deteriorates. Lukashenka has managed to create a situation where Viktor seems to be the strongest or even the only candidate to succeed him by giving him a senior position and replacing all his (Viktor's) adversaries with his confidantes in government.

Lukashenka's defiant statements nevertheless suggest that he will remain in power as long as possible and he will most likely run for a fourth term in the 2011 elections. For Lukashenka, power is a difficult thing to give up, even to his own son. But a skilful political player knows that it is better to voluntarily abdicate power than to be forced out. The recent changes in Belarus might make voluntary retirement a sensible choice for Lukashenka sooner or later. Lukashenka's image is not likely to improve in either Russia or the West in spite of his recent PR campaign. In addition, the rise of the technocrats is changing the atmosphere in Belarus to a more pragmatic and post-soviet one. This may put pressure in the long-term on Lukashenka's "Soviet-style leadership"²⁸ - the era of the "Batka"²⁹ type leader might be coming to an end.

Endnotes

¹ Eastweek Issue No. 24 (133) July 23, 2008 and No. 147 November 26, 2008

² See World Bank website

<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/ECAEXT/BELARUSEXTN/0,,contentMDK:21895426~pagePK:1497618~piPK:217854~theSitePK:328431,00.html> . Its overall rank on the ease of doing business climbed to 85 from 115. Doing Business 2009 ranks 181 economies on the overall ease of doing business based on 10 indicators of business regulation that record the time and cost to meet government requirements in starting and operating a business, trading across borders, paying taxes, and closing a business. The rankings do not reflect such areas as macroeconomic policy, quality of infrastructure, currency volatility, investor perceptions, or crime rates.

³ IMF Website <http://www.imf.org/external/np/sec/pr/2009/pr09202.htm> ; Mr. Takatoshi Kato, Deputy Managing Director and Acting Chair <http://www.imf.org/external/np/sec/pr/2009/pr09241.htm>

⁴ See for example See Wierzbowska-Miazga, Agata and Klysinski, Klamil "Changes in the Political Elite, Economy and Society of Belarus " 2009 OSW studies; Andrew Wilson Belarus after its post-Georgia elections, 26 October 2008,

http://ecfr.eu/content/entry/commentary_wilson_on_belarus/; Andrei Liakhovich, 'The Lukashenkas (There Could Be More Than One)', July 2008, The Belarus Public Policy Fund. http://pdc.ceu.hu/archive/00005191/01/080721_Belarus_Analysis_TheLukashenkas.pdf

⁵ See Belarus live "Sheiman Again... Lord or a Valuable Prisoner?" <http://belarus-live.eu/?p=386>

http://www.rferl.org/content/Belarus_Blast_Delivers_Shock_To_System/1182872.html

⁶ See Wierzbowska-Miazga, Agata and Klysinski, Klamil "Changes in the Political Elite, Economy and Society of Belarus " 2009 OSW studies; Andrei Liakhovich, 'The Lukashenkas (There Could Be More Than One)', 2008; Belarus live "Sheiman Again... Lord or a Valuable Prisoner?" <http://belarus-live.eu/?p=386> ; Andrei Liakhovich in Belarus live "Navumau's Resignation Is a Consequence of Major Changes" <http://belarus-live.eu/?p=1774>; Jan Maksymiuk, Belarus Blast Delivers Shock To The System Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Belarus 10 July 2008,

http://www.rferl.org/content/Belarus_Blast_Delivers_Shock_To_System/1182872.html

⁷ Sheyman was appointed as an assistant at large to the President in January 2009.

However his influence is probably much diminished.

⁸ Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Yuri Drakakhrust *Minsk's Own Version Of 'Fathers And Sons'* July 21, 2008 ;

http://www.rferl.org/content/Minsk's_Own_Version_Of_Fathers_And_Sons/1185154.html;

see also Andrei Liakhovich in Belarus live "Navumau's Resignation Is a Consequence of Major Changes" <http://belarus-live.eu/?p=1774>

⁹ Andrei Liakhovich, 'The Lukashenkas (There Could Be More Than One)', 2008

¹⁰ David Marples, Belarus Survey Reveals Changes in Public Mood,' *Eurasia Daily Monitor* Volume: 5 Issue: 238, 15 December 2008.

[http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews\[swords\]=8fd5893941d69d0be3f378576261ae3e&tx_ttnews\[any_of_the_words\]=Marples&tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=34270&tx_ttnews\[backPid\]=7&cHash=bb1db10693](http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews[swords]=8fd5893941d69d0be3f378576261ae3e&tx_ttnews[any_of_the_words]=Marples&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=34270&tx_ttnews[backPid]=7&cHash=bb1db10693)

¹¹ Nikolai was probably born in 2003 or 2004.

¹² See for example, Tom Parfitt, 'Belarus squirms as son follows in dictator's steps,' *The Guardian*, 6 April 2009 <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/apr/06/belarus-nikolai-lukashenka>;

In April 2007, Lukashenka stated: "My third son will be perfect for this position [i.e. the presidency], though I want to assure you, that Belarus will have one President Alexander Lukashenka for a long time", Belarus news and analysis 13 April 2007 <http://www.data.minsk.by/belarusnews/042007/65.html>; Russian News Room Friday, 10 July 2009 <http://news.russiannewsroom.com/details.aspx?item=22290>

¹³ IMF World Economic Outlook (WEO) April 2009

<http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2009/01/index.htm>

¹⁴ The rouble was devalued by 20 per cent in January 2009.

¹⁵ Ria Novosti/ Vedomosti 12 January 2007

¹⁶ See for instance Alexander Voitovich, former speaker of the upper house of the Belarusian parliament <http://en.rian.ru/world/20090423/121264951.html> ; Ria Novosti 23 April 2009 <http://en.rian.ru/world/20090423/121264951.html>

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- ¹⁷<http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5jFXUQWaAW328R4NVgyppiWVFppRA> 29 November 2008
- ¹⁸ Wojciech Konoczuk, *Difficult Ally: Belarus in Russia's foreign policy*, Centre for Eastern Studies, Warsaw, September 2008 http://osw.waw.pl/files/PRACE_28.pdf
- ¹⁹ See for instance Kononchuk (2008); Mark A. Smith, *Russo-Belarusian Relations: An Overview*, Research and Assessment Branch, UK Defence Academy 2 April 2009 (unpublished paper).
- ²⁰ Vladimir Socor, *Belarusian President Boycotts Moscow's CSTO Summit*, *Eurasia Daily Monitor* Volume: 6 Issue: 114, 15 June 2009 [http://www.jamestown.org/programs/edm/single/?tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=35126&tx_ttnews\[backPid\]=407&no_cache=1](http://www.jamestown.org/programs/edm/single/?tx_ttnews[tt_news]=35126&tx_ttnews[backPid]=407&no_cache=1)
- ²¹ <http://charter97.org/en/news/2009/6/15/19132/>
- ²² Itar-Tass news agency, 29 May 2009
- ²³ See for instance Center for Eastern Studies, Eastweek no 149 Agata Wierzbowska-Miazga, Kamil Kłysiński 26.11.2008; Andrew Wilson, *Belarus after its post-Georgia elections*, 26 October 2008 http://ecfr.eu/content/entry/commentary_wilson_on_belarus/; Andrei Liakovich (2009) Eastern Europe Studies Centre
- ²⁴ Itar-Tass news agency, 4 February 2009; *The Guardian* 3.2.2009
- ²⁵ Lyudmila Alexandrova's column *Itar-Tass* 15 June 2009
- ²⁶ Hiski Haukkala, Arkady Moshes, *Staying the course: The options of the West in the face of Belarus*. UPI Briefing Paper 12, December 2007. <http://www.upi-fia.fi/en/publication/40/>
- ²⁷ *Eurasia Daily Monitor* Volume: 6 Issue: 26, David Marples 9 February 2009 and *Eurasia Daily Monitor* Volume: 6 Issue: 95 18 May 2009
- ²⁸ *Belarusian Review*, 8 February 2008 Vol. 19, No.1 *Belarus: Lukashenka - Father Of The Nation, Or Loudmouth Autocrat?*
- ²⁹ Lukashenka is widely called Batka (daddy) among Belarusian citizens.

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