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## The international support project #FreeAllWords translates works of Belarusian Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Aleś Bialacki into seven languages

(Brussels/Berlin, 09 December 2022) In October 2022, the Nobel Committee in Oslo awarded the Nobel Peace Prize 2022 to the Belarusian lawyer and philosopher Aleś (Aliaksandr) Bialacki (also: Belyatsky), to the Ukrainian Center for Civil Liberties (CCL), and to the Russian human rights organisation Memorial. Aleś Bialacki, founder of the human rights organisation Viasna (also: Vyazna, “spring”), is currently in prison for the second time. He is accused in smuggling or contraband, and in financing of protests. During the pro-democracy protests following the rigged presidential elections in 2020, “Viasna” was active in Belarus by promoting freedom of assembly, defending the rights of political prisoners, and meticulously documenting thousands and thousands of human rights violations.

Translators from #FreeAllWords have transferred excerpts from his 2014 prison diary (“The Brown Notebook”/ “Karyčnievy sšytak” and “Dreams”/“Mary”) into English, Hungarian, Lithuanian, Finnish, French, Spanish and Danish, with impressive speed. Bialacki vividly describes his experiences during his first stay in prison from 2011 to 2014. The German version by Lydia Nagel will be published before Christmas. The English translation by Jim Dingley is available on the website of freeallwords.org. “In Belarus, a dictator has been attacking his own people with terror and violence for years now,” says European Writers' Council President Nina George. “Aleś Bialacki’s diary excerpts document fear, anger, hope, and pain, and should be a reminder to us not to look away, and not to forget the people and the attacked culture in Belarus.”

71 translators from 24 countries with experience in translating from Ukrainian, Belarusian and Russian, are now registered within the donation-based text and translation fund. Since the launch of #FreeAllWords in June 2022, works of prose and poetry by eleven authors from Belarus and five from Ukraine have been translated into nine languages (Danish, German, English, Finnish, French, Lithuanian, Romanian, Spanish and Hungarian). All authors, translators, and texts are presented on the #FreeAllWords website <https://freeallwords.org/>. Media and literary institutions as well as writers' and translators' associations are invited to freely use these texts and the background information provided to draw attention to the situation of writers in Ukraine and Belarus.

### About #FreeAllWords

The #FreeAllWords text and translation fund is a joint support project for Belarusian and Ukrainian writers of all genres and is organised under the umbrella of the European Writers' Council (EWC) . #FreeAllWords was initiated by the authors' associations A\*dS (Authors of Switzerland), Forfatterforbundet (Norway), and the Community of Belarusian Writers (Belarus).

Within the framework of #FreeAllWords, short, topical, existing as well as original texts, interviews, reports, essays, poems and other literary forms are to be translated into European and international languages and disseminated through a wide variety of communication channels - digital, print, blogs, media, etc.

The authors' and translators' fees are paid from the #FreeAllWords fund.

Foundations involved so far: Fritt Ord, Kopinor (both Norway), Landis&Gyr, Karl und Sophie Bindung Stiftung (both Switzerland). Other supporters: The Irish Writers' Union, the Society of Swedish Authors in Finland, the Lithuanian Writers Union and the Swedish Writers Union.

The goal is one million published words for peace and freedom of expression, for understanding between cultures and nations, and as a key contribution in persuading people for a free, democratic, peaceful and inclusive society.

In particular, writers' associations in the European book sector and literature institutions are welcome to request texts and bring authors closer to the public. The European press and media can also register for texts and translations. Literary translators from the language regions of Ukraine and Belarus are also invited to register. The website [www.freeallwords.org](http://www.freeallwords.org) also contains a summary of the frequent asked questions and answers about the programme so far, as well as a portrait of the participants and their works.

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