

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



Prosecutor General of the Republic of Belarus

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Dear Prosecutor General

I am deeply concerned about the unfair trial and detention of Mikita Zalatarou, who is serving a sentence of five years in an educational colony for actions he allegedly committed at the age of 16.

Mikita Zalatarou was arrested on 11 August 2020 in his hometown of Homel and accused of having participated in anti-government protests and having thrown Molotow Cocktails at police officers. He himself claims he did not participate in the protests but was in the street waiting for a friend when demonstrators in the vicinity started to flee from the police. He also denies having attacked the police in any way.

Mikita Zalatarou claims he was beaten on arrest and during detention with an electric shock baton. Police officers interrogated him in the absence of a lawyer or a responsible adult. He was held in pre-trial detention for over six months, partly in solitary confinement – in violation of human rights standards regarding the treatment of children in detention.

On 22 February 2021, Mikita Zalatarou was found guilty in an unfair trial, even though no substantial evidence was presented that he actually had committed the crimes he was accused of.

I appeal to you to release Mikita Zalatarou immediately pending a new, fair trial that is in line with international justice standards for children.

Yours sincerely,