

**Defense Security Cooperation Agency
Country Information Paper**



Belarus

Chief of Mission: Scott M. Rauland,
Chargé d'Affaires
SDO/DATT: Vacant
SCO Chief: Vacant



SECURITY COOPERATION RELATIONSHIP:

The United States established diplomatic relations with Belarus in 1991, following its independence from the Soviet Union, and the U.S. Embassy in Minsk was officially opened on January 31, 1992. Belarus has been led by the authoritarian Alyaksandr Lukashenka since 1994. Bilateral relations cooled following his election and have remained at a low level, despite U.S. efforts with the European Union to set benchmarks for improving Belarus' human rights and electoral practices. As a result of a series of events and tendencies, the United States announced in 1997 its decision to pursue a "selective engagement" policy with the Belarusian authorities, which included downgrading and limiting government-to-government contacts.

Both the U.S. and European Union (EU) imposed sanctions on senior regime officials after manipulated 2006 presidential elections, and the U.S. added more sanctions in 2007. President Lukashenka responded in March 2008 by forcing the departure of the U.S. ambassador and reducing the Embassy American staff from 35 to five (either stationed or visiting for technical or administrative support). This action led to the departure of the U.S. defense attaché and the Marine Security Group.

In August 2009, Assistant Secretary of State Philip H. Gordon traveled to Belarus for meetings with government officials on improving bilateral relations on the basis of improved respect for human rights and democratic principles in Belarus. The Belarusian authorities failed to take any steps in this direction; moreover, following the December 2010 elections, they launched an unprecedented crackdown that represented a serious step backward in democratic development.

The majority of U.S. government assistance programs in Belarus aim to create space for the free expression of political views, advance human rights, support civil society development, and promote media freedom. With very limited exceptions, including humanitarian assistance and exchange programs involving state-run educational institutions, U.S. assistance is not channeled through the Government of Belarus.

The United States suspended all military contact and training activities with Belarus in 1998. Direct military-to-military cooperation, including exercises and training, continues to be minimal, although there is a great desire on the Belarusian side to reestablish such contacts and cooperation. Belarus participated in the U.S. Army Europe-led RAPID TRIDENT exercise held in Ukraine in July-August 2011. Since then, there have been no military engagement activities.

PROGRAM HISTORY:

	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
FMS Agreements	\$0.000M	\$0.000M	\$0.000M	\$0.000M	\$0.000M	\$0.000M*
FMF Funding	\$0.000M	\$0.000M	\$0.000M	\$0.000M	\$0.000M	\$0.000M*
IMET Funding	\$0K	\$0K	\$0K	\$0K	\$0K	\$0K*
IMET Students	0	0	0	0	0	0*

* Preliminary

** Projected

SECURITY COOPERATION ORGANIZATION:

As of July 1, 2014, there is no Office of Defense Cooperation at the U.S. Embassy in Minsk.

SECURITY COOPERATION POLICY CONTEXT:

In accordance with the International Trafficking in Arms Regulation (ITAR), Section 126.1, as amended on July 22, 1993, it is the policy of the United States to deny licenses and other approvals for the export and import of defense articles destined for or originating in Belarus. As such, Belarus is not eligible to use the Foreign Military Sales program.

BILATERAL MEETINGS:

Bilateral Defense Consultations (BDC):

- The Office of the Secretary of Defense does not hold BDCs with Belarus.

Security Assistance Management Review/Financial Management Review (SAMR/FMR):

- DSCA has never held a SAMR/FMR with Belarus.

FOREIGN MILITARY SALES (FMS):

Belarus is not eligible to use the Foreign Military Sales program and has never had an FMS case.

SECURITY COOPERATION PROGRAMS:

Excess Defense Articles (EDA):

Belarus is not eligible to receive grant EDA and has not requested or received items via the EDA program.

Foreign Military Financing (FMF):

Belarus has not received FMF.

Coalition Readiness Support Program (CRSP):

Belarus is not eligible to receive support from the CRSP program.

Section 1206:

Belarus is not a participant in the Section 1206 program.

Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI):

Belarus is not a participant in the GPOI program.

Global Security Contingency Fund (GSCF):

Belarus is not a participant in the GSCF program.

End Use Monitoring (EUM):

There is currently no EUM program for Belarus.

International Military Education and Training (IMET):

Belarus began receiving IMET funds in Fiscal Year 1993, and through Fiscal Year 1998 received a total of \$904,000. The principal objective of the IMET program in Belarus was to facilitate the development of a new, non-political professional officer cadre, which would help encourage the development of an independent, reform-minded, Western-oriented defense ministry and military, with emphasis on civilian control of the military. The IMET program was suspended in 1998, although Belarusian officers continue to attend programs at the George C. Marshall Center in Garmisch, Germany, most recently the Program in Advanced Security Studies in 2009, the Germany Ministry of Foreign Affairs Conference in 2010, and the Countering Terrorism Community of Interest in 2012.

Counter Terrorism Fellowship Program (CTFP):

Belarus is not a participant in the CTFP program.

Warsaw Initiative Funds (WIF):

Belarus joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) Partnership for Peace (PfP) Program in 1995 and therefore may have participated in WIF-funded events until the suspension of military cooperation activities in 1998.

Defense Institution Reform Initiative (DIRI):

Belarus is not a participant in the DIRI program.

Ministry of Defense Advisor Program (MoDA):

Belarus is not a participant in the MoDA program.

Humanitarian Assistance (HA):

From 2001 to 2007, U.S. European Command executed a series of Humanitarian Assistance projects in Belarus, but the last one was completed in 2007. The U.S. completed the renovation of the Regional Blood Transfusion Center at the Gomel Emergency Treatment Hospital in July 2001. A joint project between the Gomel Regional Government and the U.S. European Command, it involved the complete renovation of a century-old building with a project cost of \$475,000, including the installation of automated heating and plumbing systems, air conditioning and ventilation systems, potable water supply, and electrical wiring; reinforcement and insulation of walls, floors, and ceilings and the installation of windows; landscaping; and additional repairs. This hospital serves as the primary emergency medical treatment facility for a city of more than 600,000 inhabitants, as well as numerous rural areas in the region still suffering the after-effects

of the Chernobyl incident. The project was initiated in March 2000 and completed in July 2001, when General Joseph Ralson, Commander-in-Chief of the U.S. European Command, and U.S. Ambassador Michael Kozak dedicated the facility. On January 29, 2003, the U.S. signed a contract to donate \$190,000 for continued renovation of the Gomel Emergency Treatment Hospital, and in July 2004, U.S. European Command announced the allocation of an additional \$200,000 for this project, which was completed by 2008. In May 2004, the U.S. military donated \$95,000 for the renovation of the Turov regional hospital. In July 2005, U.S. European Command donated a passenger van to the hospital in Turov and a van and generators to the hospital in Druya via the Humanitarian Excess Property program.

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