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Strasbourg, European Parliament, 11 March 2009

European Parliament President
Hans-Gert Pöttering met in Strasbourg with students of exiled Belarusian
'European Humanities University'

Hans-Gert Pöttering, the President of the European Parliament, invited a group of 20 Belarusian students from the European Humanities University which since 2004 is in-exile in Vilnius, to visit the European Parliament in Strasbourg. This was the President's second meeting with the students after he had met some two hundred of them in April of last year during his official visit to Lithuania.

After his meeting with the group of students visiting him in Strasbourg, the President made the following comment:

"I am happy that my invitation extended to the students of the University during our first meeting in Vilnius last April has materialised. We sat together and had a lively exchange-of-views on the future of Belarus and the role these young, bright and highly educated people can play to help their country on the path of democratic change and freedom. We in the European Parliament are strong defenders of the right of these young people, and their compatriots in Belarus, to live in an open and democratic society.

The European Parliament strongly supports the ultimate desire of the students and the faculty of the European Humanities University to end their forced time in-exile and go back to Minsk. The necessary pre-requisite of such a move is of course the firm establishment of free, sound, academic and scientific conditions as a general pattern in Belarus education system. Providing such guarantees is indeed a crucial test case for the Belarus authorities, and would be a clear signal of their serious commitment and goodwill for positive change".

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