

Belarus - Declaration of Sovereignty

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[Preamble]

The Supreme Soviet of the Republic of Belarus, expressing the will of the people of the Republic of Belarus, aware of its responsibility for the destiny of the Belarusian nation, reaffirming its respect for the dignity and the rights of the people of all nationalities residing in the Republic of Belarus, expressing its respect for the sovereign rights of all the peoples of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and of the world, considering the Republic a full and independent member of the world community, acting in conformity with the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other universally recognized international legal instruments, hereby solemnly proclaims the full state sovereignty of the Republic of Belarus as the supremacy, the independence, and the absolute state power of the Republic within its territory, the competence of its laws, the independence of the Republic in foreign relations, and declares its determination to establish a state, based on law.

Article 1 [Sovereignty]

(1) The Republic of Belarus is a sovereign state established on the basis of the realization by the Belarusian nation of its inalienable right to self-determination, state-language status of the Belarusian language, and the supremacy of the people in the determination of its destiny.

(2) The inalienable rights of the Republic of Belarus as a sovereign state shall be realized in conformity with the universally recognized norms of international law. The Republic of Belarus shall safeguard and protect the right of the Belarusian people to have its own state.

(3) The Republic of Belarus shall have its own emblem, flag, and anthem.

(4) Any forcible acts against the national statehood of the Republic of Belarus committed by political parties, public associations, or individuals shall be punishable by law.

Article 2 [People, Democracy, Representation]

(1) The citizens of the Republic of Belarus of all nationalities constitute the Belarusian people, which shall be endowed with the sovereignty and shall be the sole source of state power in the Republic. The sovereignty of the people shall be realized both directly and through representative organs of state power.

(2) The right to act in the name of all the people of the Republic shall be vested exclusively in the Supreme Soviet of the Republic of Belarus.

Article 3 [Supreme Goals]

The state sovereignty of the Republic of Belarus shall be proclaimed in the name of the supreme goals, i.e., free development and prosperity, a dignified life for every citizen of the Republic on the basis of ensuring human rights of the individual in conformity with the Constitution and its international obligations.

Article 4 [Citizenship]

Citizenship of the Republic of Belarus shall be an integral part of its sovereignty. The Republic shall protect the honor, the health, the rights, and the legal interests of its citizens, and shall ensure their social protection. They shall enjoy protection of the Republic of Belarus outside its territory. The Republic may confer and terminate citizenship.

Article 5 [Economy]

(1) The land, its mineral wealth, the other natural resources on the territory of the Republic of Belarus, and its air space shall be the property of the Belarusian people which shall have the exclusive rights of their possession, use, and disposal.

(2) The determination of the legal status of all kinds of property shall be within the exclusive competence of the Republic of Belarus.

(3) The Republic of Belarus shall have the right to its portion of the all-Union property according to the contribution of the Belarusian people and, as a founding Republic of the Soviet Union having legal capacity, shall have the right to its portion of the diamond, currency, and reserves of the USSR.

(4) The Republic of Belarus shall establish the National Bank, accountable to the Supreme Soviet of the Republic, shall organize its financial and credit system, shall confirm the right of ownership of specialized banks based on its territory at the time of the adoption of this Declaration, shall organize its own taxation and customs services, and shall have the right to establish its own monetary system.

Article 6 [Territorial Integrity]

(1) The territory of the Republic of Belarus shall be indivisible and inviolable and shall not be altered or used without the consent of the Republic of Belarus.

(2) All questions concerning borders shall be decided only on the basis of the mutual consent of the Republic of Belarus and the adjacent sovereign states by the conclusion of appropriate agreements, subject to ratification by the Supreme Soviet of the Republic of Belarus.

Article 7 [Supremacy of the Constitution and Laws]

(1) Within the territory of the Republic of Belarus, the Constitution and the laws shall have supremacy.

(2) All citizens and stateless persons, state organs, enterprises, institutions, and organizations based or functioning on the territory of the Republic of Belarus shall obey the laws.

(3) The delimitation of legislative, executive, and judicial power shall be the most important principle of the functioning of the Republic of Belarus as a state, based on law.

(4) The supreme supervision over the strict and uniform observance of the laws shall be exercised by Procurator-General appointed by the Supreme Soviet of the Republic of Belarus.

Article 8 [Nature, Military, Chernobyl Disaster]

(1) The Republic of Belarus shall independently establish a procedure for organizing nature preservation, utilization of natural resources of the territory of the Republic, and shall ensure ecological security for the people of the Republic. The Republic of Belarus shall have the right to compensation for the damage incurred as a result of activities of all-Union organs, Union republics, and other states.

(2) The Republic of Belarus demands from the Government of the USSR an unconditional and prompt compensation for the damage connected with the elimination of the effects of the Chernobyl disaster.

(3) The Republic of Belarus shall have the sovereign right to determine for its citizens the procedure and conditions of military service, and service in the organs of state and public security, and to decide on the questions of deployment of troops and armaments on its territory.

(4) No military units, military bases or installations of other countries shall be deployed on

the territory of the Republic of Belarus without the consent of its Supreme Soviet.

(5) The Republic of Belarus shall use its freedom and sovereignty first and foremost to save the people of the Republic of Belarus from the effects of the Chernobyl disaster.

Article 9 [Culture]

(1) The Republic of Belarus shall be independent in deciding on the questions of culture and spiritual development of the Belarusian nation, other national communities of the Republic, and in organizing its own system of information, education, and upbringing.

(2) The Republic of Belarus shall ensure functioning of the Belarusian language in all spheres of social life, and the preservation of national traditions and historical symbols.

(3) National, cultural, and historical values on the territory of the Republic of Belarus shall be the exclusive property of the Republic and its citizens.

Article 10 [Armed Forces, Nuclear-Free Zone]

(1) The Republic of Belarus shall have the right to its own armed forces, internal security forces, organs of state and public security, which shall be controlled by the Supreme Soviet of the Republic of Belarus.

(2) The Republic of Belarus sets the aim to make its territory a nuclear-free zone and to become a neutral state.

Article 11 [Voluntary Unions]

(1) The Republic of Belarus shall independently exercise the right to enter into voluntary unions with other states and to withdraw freely from these unions.

(2) The Republic of Belarus proposes to commence immediately the elaboration of an agreement on a union of sovereign socialist states.

Article 12 [New Constitution]

The provisions of the present Declaration shall be implemented by the Supreme Soviet of the Republic of Belarus through the adoption of a new Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Republic of Belarus, and laws of the Republic of Belarus.