

EMIL OSTROVKO,
BELARUS

WRITE
FOR
RIGHTS

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL



JAILED TEENAGER YEARNS FOR FREEDOM



EMIL OSTROVKO

BELARUS

Emil Ostrovko was waiting for his girlfriend at a bus stop on the outskirts of Minsk in April 2018. They were going to spend the day together. Suddenly police officers arrived. They beat Emil and arrested him for distributing illegal drugs. He was just 17.

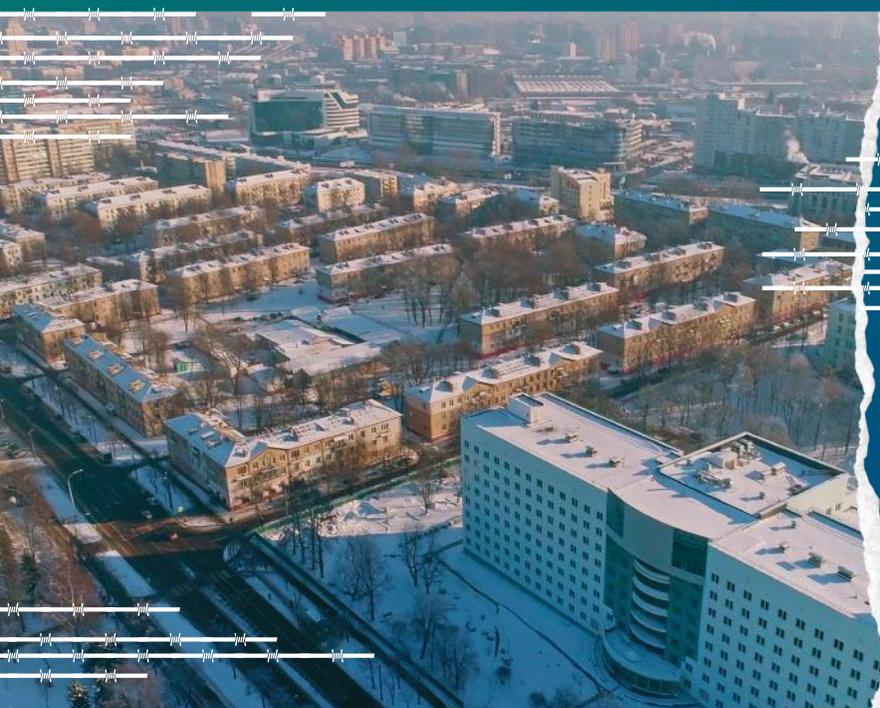
Weeks earlier, Emil had started an after-school job as a courier for an online company. His employer had told him the parcels he was delivering contained legal smoking mixtures.

After spending months detained, Emil received a 10-year prison sentence for drug trafficking. Investigators never looked for the owner of the company, nor anyone else. Emil was the only one prosecuted. The sentence was later reduced to 8 years when some charges were dropped. He is held in Correctional Colony number 2 in Bobruisk. He struggles with chronic bronchial asthma.

Before his arrest Emil was an energetic, caring young man who loved studying, reading and taking care of his little sister. Now in prison, he hasn't been allowed to finish high school and his plans to study business and economics in Poland have been crushed.

Emil is one of around 15,000 people serving lengthy prison sentences in Belarus for minor drugs offences. They are treated far worse than other offenders. President Lukashenko has publicly advocated for prison conditions so awful that, in his words, the prisoners will "pray for death." Young offenders in juvenile colonies are forced to do long hours of hard labour. Emil wasn't allowed to carry his asthma medicine with him, and got frostbite from carrying snow with his bare hands and injured his feet when the shoes he was forced to wear were two sizes too small. Things got a little better in adult prison. He can now receive paperbacks and study, and he can keep his medication close by. But Emil's youth and potential are being wasted.

Ask Belarus to free Emil.



#W4R19

WRITE TO THE PROSECUTOR GENERAL

Draw his attention to the detention of Emil on a minor drug offence and to the inhumane conditions that he and other youth endure in custody.

Urge him to immediately release Emil and to clear his criminal record. Insist that children are no longer imprisoned for minor drug offences.

Prosecutor General Alexander Koniuk

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Salutation: Dear Prosecutor General

SHOW YOUR SUPPORT FOR EMIL

Send your messages of solidarity and strength so he knows he is not alone. Please avoid the topic of drugs, but you may send a Christmas card or other type of greeting. He enjoys biographies, poetry, animals, and articles on economics, cryptocurrency and innovation.

Emil Vadimovich Ostrovko

*Correctional Colony Number 2,
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**WRITE A LETTER
CHANGE A LIFE**

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