

Belarus accused of hijacking plane

The U.S. and Europe have expressed outrage after Belarus forced an airliner to land in the country after a bomb threat so that authorities could arrest a Belarusian activist who was onboard the flight

Exiled opposition activist **Roman Protasevich** (seen in 2017 being detained by Belarusian police) is prominent critic of Belarus' authoritarian president, **Alexander Lukashenko**

■ **May 23:** Protasevich travelling on **Ryanair** flight from Athens to Vilnius when Belarusian authorities scrambled fighter jet and diverted airliner to Minsk

Flight path: Plane flying through Belarus' airspace, diverted about 10km from Lithuanian border after authorities alert crew to false bomb threat

■ **Minsk:** Authorities board plane and arrest Protasevich – journalist who covered opposition protests against Lukashenko in 2020. Plane allowed to take off again for Vilnius, but without Protasevich on board

