

Unique monument of rights

By Alexey Fedosov

Constitutional acts of Belarus over the last five centuries presented at an exhibition, entitled *The Way to the Constitution*, in the National Library's Book Museum

This year marks an important anniversary of major documents in the legal system of Belarus: the 490th anniversary of the Statute of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, the 100th anniversary of the first Constitution of the BSSR and the 25th anniversary of the Constitution of the Republic of Belarus. “*The Way to the Constitution* exhibition reflects the basic steps our country made in

the development and formation of its basic law — the Constitution of the sovereign independent state,” noted the Director of the National Library of Belarus, Roman Motulsky. “We’ve selected the exhibits which show how our history, traditions and culture, including legal, spans several centuries.”

The Way to the Constitution exhibition includes unique manuscripts, early printed editions and publications of the 19th-21st centuries. A significant part is devoted to the Statute of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, with originals and facsimiles of various Statutes of 1529, 1566 and 1588 being on display (which stipulate

the norms of constitutional rights for the first time). The 1994 Constitution of the Republic of Belarus in its initial state occupies an honorary place, as does one which shows later changes and amendments. In addition, the second part presents documents and materials, alongside scientific research and amendments to the Constitution. Visitors can see copies of protocols of the working group’s session of the Constitutional Commission of the Supreme Soviet and other official documents, on show for the first time thanks to co-operation with the National Archives of Belarus. The exhibition also boasts a virtual element, with all



normative-legal acts of the country presented in electronic form.

The Director of the National Centre of Legislation and Legal Research, Vadim Ipatov, who attended the opening of the exhibition, underlined that when working with any legal document, everyone relies on the Constitution. “Twenty-five years ago, Belarus chose its own path and adopted its Constitution which

incorporated the best values of the democratic establishment of the state, as well as the rights and freedoms of citizens. At present, thanks to this exhibition, we have an opportunity to penetrate deep into the history of Belarus, particularly, in the history of its major law,” he said.

Such expositions help us to know the sources of our state’s construction.