

An open letter to the Foreign Affairs Council of the European Union (September 21, Brussels)

September 20, 2020

Dear ministers,

We welcome the effort of top European politicians to take part in solving the crisis in Belarus. We fully support the appeal of the European Council to stop the violence in the country and to start national dialogue about the nonrecognition of Alexander Lukashenko as the legitimate president. We also back the resolution of the European Parliament regarding the topic of sanctioning the leaders of the ruthless Belarusian regime.

The latest developments show that Belarusian leadership is ignoring these appeals from the European Union and as a matter of fact, rejects them. We can currently see intense violations of fundamental human rights and of Belarusian law by the state's institutions (police, courts, prosecution)

A particularly alarming fact is that Alexander Lukashenko who doesn't have a legitimate mandate and is now the illegitimate president of Belarus is starting talks with the Russian leadership instead of encouraging dialogue with his people. These backdoor meetings could threaten Belarusian sovereignty and only for the guarantee of rescuing and keeping Alexander Lukashenko safe. We similarly condone the Russian intervention in its neighbouring state without a proper international mandate to do so. This is, in essence, meddling in Belarusian internal affairs and it could potentially lead to a military or police intervention.

Considering that Belarus is a neighbour of the European Union just as of Russia, EU's participation in solving the Belarusian crisis should be to such an extent that the Belarusian citizens' fundamental human rights are being respected again. In the long term the European Union has been offering the countries of this region an opportunity to create a space of stability, economic prosperity and democracy thanks to the Eastern Partnership. The post-election state of the country, however, requires even more daily attention. We cannot leave the deaths of peaceful citizens and mass crimes against humanity without investigation.

We therefore appeal to the European Council to take the following steps:

- Introduce personal sanctions directed at persons that participated in the falsification of the elections or on the brutal repressions of the protests, including Alexander Lukashenko and his closest associates responsible for these unlawful acts. These sanctions should be regularly revised. If the unlawful action and violation of human rights continues these sanctions must be further increased or amended by adding other natural or legal persons.
- Use the tools and resources of OSCE a) for international mediation of political dialogue with all parts of the Belarusian society b) to investigate and punish the crimes against humanity, including the Moscow mechanism of OSCE

- Use all means of European diplomacy to stop Russian meddling in the internal matters of Belarus.
- Provide financial aid solely to the Belarus civic society and immediate suspension of EU aid to official Belarus state institutions.
- Recognize Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya as the representative of Belarus who has the public and moral mandate to represent the Belarusian people, lead national dialogue and ensure a peaceful transfer of power in Belarus to the new and legitimate leaders who will be elected in free and fair elections.

To improve the situation it is necessary to use all the peace and lawful measures that are available to the European Union to the highest degree and thus prevent the impending, much more serious consequences on Europe and especially on the people of Belarus.

The letter was created within an informal Czech platform called Česko-Bělarus (www.ceskobelarus.cz). It was then shared with Czech public figures.

Signatures by September 20:

Monika MacDonagh-Pajerová, diplomat, university teacher
 David Smoljak, senator
 Marta Kubišová, singer
 Petr Hlaváček, historian, philosopher
 Olga Sommerová, documentary film director
 Mikuláš Minář, chairman at Million moments for democracy
 Ivan M. Havel, scientist
 Dagmar Havlová, maths scientist, entrepreneur
 Benjamin Roll, student, deputy chairman at Million moments for democracy
 Karel B. Mueller, professor of political science
 Miroslava Němcová, member of parliament
 Petr Kolář, diplomat, adviser
 Michaela Lebeda, foreign coordinator at Million moments for democracy, IT project manager, designer
 Andrea Sedláčková, film director
 David Stulík, analyst at European Values Centre for security policy, diplomat
 Alena Kovářová, Belarusians' representative at Government Council for national minorities
 Vladimír Mišík, musician
 Lucie Fialová, doctor
 Jan Horník, senator
 Jiřina Šiklová, sociologist
 Tomáš Bojar, scriptwriter, film director
 Václav Hampl, senator
 Kateřina Krylová, lawyer
 Eva Lustigová, chairwoman, Arnošt Lustig Foundation
 Petr Zahradník, economist, member of the European economic and social committee
 Kamila Veselá, editor, Karolinum
 Aleš Lederer, publisher
 Jana Marco, former member of parliament, entrepreneur
 Jiří Oberfalzer, senator
 Jana Ter-Akopow Čemusová, university teacher

Viktor Stoilov, publisher
Nataša Dudinská, documentarist, publisher
Jiří Voráč, film historian, university teacher
Karel Kühnl, journalist, former defense minister
Petr Jarchovský, scenarist, university teacher
Věra Roubalová Kostlánová, psychoterapeutist
Miroslav Balašík, publisher
Helena Klímová, psychologist
Michael Kocáb, musician, former minister of human rights
Marta Jirousová, teacher
Jan Horník, senator
Jefim Fištejn, journalist
Stanislav Devátý, lawyer
Jan Hřebejk, film director
Mikuláš Kroupa, director at Post Bellum, Paměť národa
Rebeka Křížanová Bartůňkova, journalist
Martin Krafl, cultural manager, České literární centrum
Pavel Žáček, historian, member of parliament
Roman Vávra, film director
Jan Lipavský, member of parliament
Kateřina Fričová, producer, university teacher
Fedor Gál, sociologist, publisher
Jan Štern, journalist
Markéta Gregorova, member of the European parliament
Petr Brod, journalist
Soňa Illnerová Pajerová, lawyer
Pavel Štern, sociologist
Noemi Zárubová-Pfeffermannová, university teacher
Martin Kryl, lawyer
Pavel Kosatík, writer
Ivan Gabal, former member of parliament, sociologist
František Emmert, writer and university teacher
Michaela Stoilova, publisher
Alena Muellerová, dramaturge and writer
Dana Emingerová, journalist
František Kopřiva, member of parliament
Dorotea Mejstříková, university student
Jakub Klepal, director at Forum 2000
Mikuláš Peksa, member of the European parliament