



Mrs Ursula von der Leyen,
President of the European Commission

Mr Charles Michel,
President of the European Council

Mr Jens Stoltenberg,
NATO Secretary General

We, Chairs of our respective parliament's Committees, strongly condemn the ongoing Lukashenko regime hybrid attack at the Eastern borders of the EU and NATO. In retaliation to existing EU sanctions, the illegitimate Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko has been instrumental in creating an artificial migration route and cynically exploiting migrants in his attempts to destabilise Poland, Lithuania and Latvia, and the entire European Union, to force the EU to lift the sanctions imposed on his regime.

We acknowledge the efforts of the European Commission to find responses to the migration crisis created on the external borders and engage in talks with third countries to stem the flow of migrants to Belarus, from where in turn, they are to be used as part of Lukashenko regime's hybrid warfare tactics. Since spring 2021, we have observed and adapted to the evolving attack by the Lukashenko regime on the EU by orchestrating intense migrant flows to the borders of Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland with Belarus. The recent escalation near the Polish-Belarusian border has changed the security situation, creating severe humanitarian and security challenges to the EU. It demands decisive and joint action to counter the crisis.

Today, despite international efforts of the democratic community and the work done on the ground to physically defend Europe's frontiers, thousands of illegal migrants are still planning or already on their way to travel to Minsk to then attempt to enter the EU and NATO territories illegally.

Suppose the regime and Belarus refuse to respect its international obligations and commitments, undermine the peace and security of Europe, and continue to repress and abuse people seeking nothing more than to live in freedom. In that case, we will continue to pressure Lukashenko and those supporting his regime, and will not lessen our calls for accountability and continue to draw the international community's attention.

Developments on the EU border indicate a need to consider how to best adapt the existing legal framework to the new realities to enable us to adequately address attempts of instrumentalisation of illegal migration for political purposes and other hybrid threats. No third party – be it a country or supra-national groups –

should be able to make use of the EU's migration and asylum system to exert pressure and blackmail the EU and its Member States. We need to respond with appropriate tools and measures to let us avoid rather than deal with the grave consequences of these hybrid attacks and the suffering and indignity caused by the cynical use of human lives for political purposes.

We call for sanctions on all Belarusian airports and ask that Belarus be declared a no-fly zone, and, accordingly, for sanctions on all international airlines that breach this ban and continue to assist in the inhuman instrumentalisation of illegal migration. Furthermore, if third countries airlines continue to engage in these illicit activities, the EU and its partners should sanction these airlines in their territories.

We call on our allies and our Western partners to take action to prevent the hybrid aggression of Lukashenko and to investigate if and to what extent third countries are involved in supporting the Lukashenko regime's illegal activities. This requires taking the appropriate measures to engage internationally to ensure that those who seek to attack Europe by weaponising human misery know that the border will be defended. The tragic plight of migrants on the border is part of Lukashenko's mission to distract, provoke and intimidate.

We reiterate the importance of swift adaptation of the EU legal framework and developing tools underpinned by adequate financial support to ensure a solid response to counter the instrumentalisation of illegal migration and other hybrid threats.

We call for a broader inquiry into the wider scale of the plans of which these hybrid tactics are part of and consider who and why may be engaged in the artificial creation of a crisis by stoking fears and inciting political and social unrest via several tactics, thus undermining the legitimacy and therefore the resilience of the EU and NATO. We invite talks at the highest level and would endorse a United Nations Security Council engagement regarding the tactics of weaponised migration and hybrid warfare on the external border of the European Union and NATO.

We call to initiate international trial process including universal jurisdiction for convicting Alexander Lukashenko and members of his regime personally for the crimes committed against the people of Belarus on a massive scale also we call to consider bringing the case of Belarus to the International Court of Justice on the basis of the violations of the Chicago Convention, the Montreal Convention and the UN Convention against Torture committed by Lukashenko's regime.

There is a need for a systemic, coordinated response that boosts our resilience, a strictly focused economic and diplomatic effort on the part of the EU to reign in any attempts against the bloc, and there is an urgent need for the development of countermeasures to deter future provocations or attempts to sow distrust and discord among us.

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