



Delegation for relations with Belarus

Joint statement by:

- **the Chair of the Delegation for relations with Belarus, MEP Juozas OLEKAS, and**
- **the European Parliament's Standing Rapporteur on Belarus, MEP Petras AUŠTREVICĪUS**

on the illegal detention of EU Chargé d'Affaires Evelina Schulz in Minsk

Brussels, 8 September 2022 – “On Tuesday, Ms Evelina Schulz, Chargé d'Affaires at the EU Delegation to Belarus, was detained for two hours at a police station in Minsk after attending yet another sham trial of political prisoners. Following this trial, Viasna Human Rights Centre’s coordinator Marfa Rabkova and volunteer Andrei Chapiuk were sentenced to fifteen and six years in prison, respectively.

This outrageous provocation – a direct, physical attack against an accredited diplomat is yet another indication that Lukashenka’s regime stops at nothing in its destructive path, even if it means jeopardising what is left of diplomatic relations with its neighbours.

It is also a blatant violation of international agreements ratified by Belarus itself, first and foremost the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations.

We call for a robust response from the European Union and its Member States to this latest outrage, namely, a swift reduction of the number of Belarusian diplomats accredited in Brussels and other European capitals, as well as a review of its diplomatic presence in Belarus.

We reiterate our call to the Belarusian authorities to release immediately and unconditionally all political prisoners, to drop all charges against them and to engage in a genuine, inclusive dialogue with the democratic forces and civil society in order to find a way out of the current crisis and enable a peaceful political transition.”

For further information contact:

Eastern Partnership and Russia Unit, tel. [+32 2 284 26 43](tel:+3222842643), e-mail: D-BY@europarl.europa.eu