



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 AUŠTREVICIUS**

on Lukashenka's regime's increasing involvement in Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine

Brussels, 13 October 2022 – *“Today, the leader of the Belarusian democratic forces, Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, reminded us during her visit to the European Parliament that an overwhelming majority of the people of Belarus are opposed to their country’s involvement in Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine and are concerned about the future of their relations with the people of Ukraine.*

Yet, earlier this week, Aliaksandr Lukashenka made unfounded accusations about alleged threats to Belarus emanating from Kyiv and the West, and claimed that neighbouring EU Member States were training Belarusian radical fighters. The illegal regime also announced that Belarusian troops would be deployed on the border with Ukraine alongside Russian forces.

We deplore these groundless, ridiculous accusations and recall that it was on the contrary the Belarusian regime that became Russia's accomplice in its despicable war of aggression against Ukraine, as it allowed its territory to be used as a rear base to carry out deadly attacks against civilian targets in Ukraine.

We strongly condemn the fact that Lukashenka’s regime continues to increase its dependence on Russia and is willing take a more active role in Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine. By doing so, it sacrifices Belarus' sovereignty as well as the Belarusian people’s very own interests.

We denounce the continued deployment of Belarusian and Russian troops along the Belarusian-Ukrainian border and the positioning of weapons on the territory of Belarus, including nuclear-capable guided missiles that will enable further attacks on Ukrainian territory.

We reiterate our call on the EU to respond to these and any further similar escalations that weigh great dangers on our entire continent, by even stronger and more comprehensive EU sanctions targeting Belarusian decision-makers and officials, as well as the Belarusian economy.

We admire the determination of the Belarusian people to stand up to Lukashenka's illegitimate regime despite continued repression. The 2022 Nobel Peace Prize awarded to imprisoned human rights defender Ales Bialiatski, and through him to all the Belarusians who fight for democracy, freedom and dignity, speaks for the justice of their cause. We congratulate them warmly on this achievement and assure them again of our full solidarity and support. We call on the Belarusian authorities to release immediately and unconditionally Ales Bialiatski as well as all political prisoners and other arbitrarily detained persons.

Zhyvie Belarus!"

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