



Plenary sitting

B9-0273/2020

14.9.2020

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statement by the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

pursuant to Rule 132(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on the situation in Belarus
(2020/2779(RSP))

Manu Pineda, Helmut Scholz
on behalf of the GUE/NGL Group

**European Parliament resolution on the situation in Belarus
(2020/2779(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Charter of the United Nations,
 - having regard to the Constitution of the Republic of Belarus,
 - having regard to the Belarusian presidential election process of 9 August 2020 and the events that followed and continue to ensue,
 - having regard to the statement of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) of 17 July 2020 and to the OSCE ODIHR's previous reports on elections in Belarus,
 - having regard to the conclusions of the sole international election observation mission to Belarus conducted by the Commonwealth of Independent States and the lack of a timely invitation for the OSCE ODIHR to undertake an electoral observation mission for the presidential election,
 - having regard to the statements of the UN Secretary-General of 10 and 14 August 2020 on the post-election developments in Belarus,
 - having regard to Rule 132(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the Central Election Commission of Belarus declared that the incumbent President Alexander Lukashenko won the presidential elections after the first round with 80.1 % of the vote and that the main opposition candidate Svetlana Tikhanovskaya obtained 10.1 % of the vote;
- B. whereas this result was contested by several opposition parties; whereas foreign powers such as Canada, the United States and several EU Member States did not recognise the results of this election;
- C. whereas on 19 August 2020 the European Council agreed not to recognise the results of the election and agreed to impose sanctions shortly thereafter;
- D. whereas Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania have unilaterally imposed sanctions on up to 30 Belarusian officials;
- E. whereas since the election there have been unprecedented protests throughout the country to demand President Lukashenko's resignation and the holding of fresh elections; whereas some demonstrators have employed far-right symbols at these protests; whereas there have also been demonstrations supporting the continuation of Alexander Lukashenko's presidency and the validity of the election; whereas this has led to further polarisation and whereas political and social protests continue;

- F. whereas the special procedures of the UN Human Rights Council have criticised Belarusian authorities for the reported arbitrary detention of up to 6 700 people during the protests and have received reports on the torture and ill-treatment of 450 detainees;
- G. whereas 17 journalists from international media outlets have had their press accreditations withdrawn;
- H. whereas the opposition leader Svetlana Tikhanovskaya has declared that she is the self-proclaimed ‘interim leader’ of the country, underscoring her responsibility to initiate early elections, which complicates the achievement of a solution based on dialogue;
- I. whereas President Lukashenko has expressed his willingness to initiate a constitutional reform and to countenance early elections;
- J. whereas the US army has deployed mechanised units to areas of Lithuania close to the Belarusian border; whereas the US has deployed over 20 000 soldiers this year to Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland;
- K. whereas the Russian army has deployed additional troops close to the Belarusian border in the western region of the Russian Federation;
- L. whereas Belarus and the EU have signed several agreements in the field of governance, amongst other areas, and whereas the EU has supported Belarus in the implementation of its national human rights action plan; whereas during the period 2014-2020, the EU’s assistance to Belarus under the European Neighbourhood Instrument amounted to EUR 170 million;
- M. whereas the people of Belarus have expressed the will to defend the sovereignty of their motherland and insist on the right to determine their own future;
1. Expresses deep concern about the situation in Belarus, including the destabilisation of the country and the polarisation of Belarusian society; emphasises the need for the people of Belarus to find a peaceful and democratic solution to the present crisis which is free from foreign interference and supported, if necessary, by fully transparent international mediation;
 2. Supports the calls from various social, political and cultural activists to hold a national dialogue between all political forces on the way forward, without excluding anyone; calls for a fully independent investigation into the deficiencies of the electoral process and result, to be undertaken under the auspices of the UN and supported, in practice, by the OSCE, which should take account of all political and social parties and stakeholders in Belarus and could pave the way for new, free and fair elections, if so decided;
 3. Expresses its solidarity with Belarusian workers and trade unions; calls on the Belarusian authorities and employers to respect the fundamental right of Belarusian workers to strike, in line with International Labour Organization Conventions 87 and 98;
 4. Expresses concern about the crackdown on the peaceful protests; condemns the ongoing prosecution of various opposition representatives, protesters, civil society activists and

journalists; calls on the Belarusian authorities to immediately ensure full respect for human rights, including freedom of the press and of assembly, in accordance with international law and Belarus's international obligations;

5. Urges the Belarusian authorities to immediately halt the use of violence against peaceful protesters; calls for an investigation into the violence by law enforcement authorities, including in the deaths of five protesters, and to bring those responsible for any possible crimes to justice;
6. Expresses deep concern at reports that Belarusian law enforcement agencies are failing to take action in response to individuals in unmarked cars who beat up and kidnap peaceful demonstrators with the aim of further aggravating the confrontation; expresses deep concern about the violent actions carried out by certain opposition groups; stresses the need for a return to a political solution through an open and transparent dialogue;
7. Calls for the immediate and unconditional release of prisoners arrested in the context of the electoral campaign and of protestors who took part in demonstrations after the election, but were not involved in any violent acts;
8. Strongly rejects any covert or overt external interference from a third state, including EU Member States and neighbouring countries, in the internal affairs of Belarus; calls on all external actors to respect the sovereign right of the people of Belarus to find ways out of the crisis and to determine the future of their country; supports proposals for the OSCE to assume the role of a non-interfering mediator between the various internal political actors in an effort to overcome this crisis;
9. Calls for further transparency and close scrutiny of the EUR 53 million for Belarus announced by Commission President von der Leyen, lest that sum end up funding political organisations or serve the interests of any one party to the conflict rather than fostering dialogue;
10. Opposes the imposition of sanctions, which are counterproductive and would have a negative impact on the population, as various opposition factions and peaceful protesters have underlined;
11. Expresses deep concern about the rising tensions between the EU and Russia; calls on the parties concerned to exercise restraint and desist from fuelling the internal conflict in Belarus and using the country for their geopolitical interests; underlines the need to promote a negotiated solution to this conflict that fully respects the independence and sovereignty of Belarus; notes the desire of the majority of people in Belarus for their sovereign state to retain good, trustful and friendly cooperation and peaceful relations with the Russian Federation;
12. Expresses its concern over the failures of the EU's Eastern Partnership policy and underlines the need for its reorientation; calls on the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR) to put forward a plan for constructive dialogue with Russia which stresses the important role to be played by neighbouring countries in fostering good relations and links with both the EU and Russia; highlights the need for an autonomous international policy that is not subject to other interests, particularly in a territory as important for the

EU as its eastern vicinity;

13. Reiterates its concern at the deployment of NATO military forces on the territories of countries which have borders with Russia, which serves only to further entrench mutual distrust and foment confrontation; is concerned at the growing military presence on the borders with Belarus and calls on NATO and the Russian Federation to put an immediate stop to it;
14. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the parliaments and governments of the Member States, and the government of Belarus.