

**Priority question for written answer P-000721/2023
to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs
and Security Policy**

Rule 138

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Subject: Linking sanctions against Belarus with sanctions against Russia in view of the two regimes cooperating in the armed aggression against Ukraine

Despite the obvious failures and incompetence of the Russian invaders, all-out war has been raging in Ukraine for more than a year now. The courageous stance of the Ukrainian army and the heroism of the people of Ukraine have been effective in holding back the Russian hordes.

Unfortunately, however, recent revelations about Communist China's alleged intention to supply the Russian army with lethal weapons suggest that conflict will be a long-term one, causing further casualties on the Ukrainian side.

It is presumed that China has so far been reluctant to send military equipment to Russia because it feared the sanctions imposed on Russia. Alexander Lukashenko's visit to China on 1 March 2023 may be related to that. In an effort to get around the sanctions, China may choose to use Belarus as an intermediary to send lethal weapons to Russia.

Extending the sanctions currently imposed on Russia to include Belarus would have a pre-emptive effect in preventing China from entering the conflict as Russia's equipment base. The punitive element here is also crucial: Belarus has been a logistics base for the Russian Federation for months now and is therefore a party to the ongoing conflict.

In the light of the foregoing:

Does the High Representative support imposing on Belarus the same sanctions that apply to Russia?

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