

# Belarus: Joint Statement by HR/VP, Josep Borrell and the Ministe



We, as friends of the Belarusian people and supporters of the sovereignty and independence of the Republic of Belarus, stand by the people's wish for democratic change.

We have clearly and repeatedly expressed our positions regarding the conduct of the 9 August presidential elections in Belarus and their aftermath. The presidential elections were neither free nor fair.

The massive demonstrations in Minsk and across the country on Sunday 23 August should make it clear to the authorities that it is now urgent to launch an open and constructive national dialogue to find a way forward in Belarus.

Belarus has international obligations, which we expect the authorities to respect. As an Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) participating state, Belarus has committed to holding genuinely democratic elections and to upholding human rights and fundamental freedoms. Only a peaceful and democratic process can de-escalate the situation and provide sustainable solutions.

Therefore, we support the Albanian OSCE chairmanship-in-office proposal to support dialogue in Belarus by a joint visit with the incoming OSCE chairperson-in-office, Sweden. We call on the Belarusian authorities to accept this proposal without delay. We call on all other OSCE participating states to support this proposal as well.

We will continue to follow the situation closely and stand ready to contribute to efforts to peacefully resolve the crisis.

Canada and the European Union will continue to stand with the people of Belarus and will continue to work with our international partners to ensure that their voices are heard and their rights upheld.