

Joint statement on Belarusian authorities' instrumentalisation of migrants

We, the current European Union members of the Security Council, Estonia, France and Ireland, joined today by the Security Council members, Norway, the United Kingdom and the United States and the incoming Security Council member Albania, condemn the orchestrated instrumentalisation of human beings whose lives and wellbeing have been put in danger for political purposes by Belarus, with the objective of destabilizing neighbouring countries and the European Union's external border and diverting attention away from its own increasing human rights violations.

This tactic is unacceptable and calls for a strong international reaction and cooperation in order to hold Belarus accountable. It demonstrates how the Lukashenko regime has become a threat to regional stability. We call on the Belarusian authorities to stop these inhumane actions and not to put people's lives at risk. International organisations need to be provided with immediate and unhindered access to people therein to deliver humanitarian assistance.

The Belarusian authorities should understand that putting pressure on the European Union in this way, through a cynical instrumentalisation of migrants, will not succeed.

Together, we express our solidarity with Poland and Lithuania and stand ready to discuss further measures that we can take to support them and target those involved in and contributing to activities by the Lukashenko regime that facilitate the illegal crossing of the external borders of the European Union. We will remain united and determined to protect the EU against these hybrid operations by Belarusian authorities.

We call on the collaboration of the countries of origin and transit to warn their nationals against falling into the trap set by the Belarusian authorities.

We express deep concern at the dire situation of the migrants and urge the Belarusian authorities to provide and facilitate adequate protection and care. We stress that all actions must be guided by fundamental values, especially regarding the protection of migrants' human rights.

Finally, we highlight the importance of preventing a humanitarian crisis and ensuring that migrants who lack a legal basis to remain can be safely returned to their country of origin.