

OPEN LETTER on Diplomatic Watch activities during Presidential Elections 2020 in Belarus

Minsk, 13 August 2020

We the undersigned, European accredited diplomats who participated in diplomatic watch activities during early voting 4-8 August and on Election Day of 9 August in Belarus, would like to:

- commend all those independent observers we have met during our work, mostly outside the polling stations;
- thank explicitly those members of the electoral commissions who welcomed us wholeheartedly and were open for a constructive cooperation;
- applaud those heads of polling station who assured a fair counting of the votes;
- applaud all those citizens and voters who have been demonstrating their desire for free and fair elections.

At some of those few polling stations where we have been present, we however witnessed:

- a lack of transparency of the process with limited access granted to us as observers in the polling stations;
- numerous irregularities and significant problems that gave rise to suspicions of fraud and heavy falsification of election results – which we brought, whenever possible, to the attention of election officials on the spot, in a non-obstructive manner.

We declare that:

- we have been formally accredited by the Central Election Commission of Belarus as international observers;
- our activities were aimed at collecting basic information and developing a general sense of the conduct of elections;
- in the absence of the OSCE/ODIHR election observation mission, our insights and observation have been by nature extremely limited and only partial and thus they are not sufficient for formulating an overall assessment of the quality of an electoral process.

Undersigned:

1. Claude Altermatt, Swiss Ambassador to Belarus
2. Pavel Buček, Diplomat of the Czech Embassy Minsk, Deputy Head of Mission
3. Didier Canesse, French Ambassador to Belarus
4. Ivan Galat, Diplomat of the Czech Embassy Minsk, 1st secretary
5. Berend de Groot, citizen of the Netherlands, Head of Cooperation, EU Delegation to Belarus
6. Damiano La Verde, Diplomat of the Italian Embassy Minsk, Deputy Head of Mission
7. Kadri Lutt, Diplomat of the Estonian Embassy Minsk, Desk officer-consul
8. Maroš Mitrík, Diplomat of the Embassy of the Slovak republic in Belarus
9. Jakub Muszyński, Counsellor at the Polish Embassy in Minsk
10. Kalvi Noormägi, Diplomat of the Estonian Embassy Minsk, Deputy Head of Mission
11. Erik-Jan van Oosterhout, Chargé d’Affaires of the Embassy Office of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Belarus
12. Elgars Ozoliņš, citizen of Latvia, Diplomat of the European Union, Deputy Head of Cooperation, EU Delegation to Belarus
13. Alexandre Piquet, Diplomat of the French Embassy to Belarus, 1st Counsellor
14. Konrad Rikardson, Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Sweden in Belarus
15. Henrich Sasai, Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of the Slovak republic in Belarus
16. Evelina Schulz, citizen of Poland and Germany, Diplomat of the European Union, Deputy Head Delegation, EU Delegation to Belarus
17. Lisa Thumwood, Diplomat of the British Embassy Minsk, Deputy Head of Mission/HM Consul
18. Marcin Wnuk, Counsellor at the Polish Embassy in Minsk