

Committee on Foreign Affairs
The Chair



EXPO-COM-AFET D (2020) 29528

Mr Gediminas Kirkilas
Chair of the Committee on European Affairs
Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania
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Dear Mr Kirkilas,

Thank you for your letter of 1 October to the President of the European Parliament, in which you together with committee chairs of 13 national parliaments expressed concerns regarding the political situation in Belarus following the 9 August Presidential election. On behalf of the President and in my capacity as Chair of the European Parliament's Committee on Foreign Affairs, I would like to inform you about our position regarding the events in Belarus and the actions we are taking in this regard.

As you rightly point out in your letter, this election was marred by countless administrative malpractices and massive vote-rigging, and is regarded as neither free nor fair by the international community. The deterioration of the human rights situation, already noticeable in the run-up to the election, has taken a dramatic turn for the worse after peaceful rallies of unprecedented proportions have flared up across the country to denounce electoral fraud. It is now of utmost importance that the Belarusian regime engages in a genuine and substantial national dialogue with the representatives of the democratic opposition and civil society. The current crisis must be settled peacefully, while fully respecting the independence and sovereignty of Belarus. For this purpose, a new, free and fair election must be organised as soon as possible under international supervision.

All these principled positions have been expressed in our European Parliament's resolution of 17 September on the situation in Belarus, which you will find enclosed to this letter.

The Committee on Foreign Affairs is following the situation very closely. Together with the Subcommittee on Human Rights and the Delegation for relations with Belarus, we held several discussions dedicated to this issue, with the participation of the opposition leader Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya and members of the Coordination Council. Our Standing Rapporteur on Belarus, Petras Auštrevičius, together with the Chair of the Delegation for relations with Belarus, Robert Biedroń, have also issued joint statements on the electoral fraud and repression in the country.

I would also like to draw your attention to the Recommendation of the European Parliament to the Council, the Commission and the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy on relations with Belarus that has been placed on the draft agenda of the part-session of 19-22 October. I trust that this Recommendation will take into account the elements mentioned in your letter.

Yours sincerely,



David McAllister

cc: Petras Auštrevičius, Standing rapporteur on Belarus, Committee on Foreign Affairs
Robert Biedroń, Chair of Delegation for relations with Belarus

Encl.: *European Parliament resolution of 17 September 2020 on the situation in Belarus*