

**Sebastian Kurz**, Federal Chancellor, Republic of Austria  
**Sophie Wilmès**, Prime Minister, Kingdom of Belgium  
**Boyko Borissov**, Prime Minister, Republic of Bulgaria  
**Andrej Plenković**, Prime Minister, Republic of Croatia  
**Nicos Anastasiades**, President of the Republic, Republic of Cyprus  
**Andrej Babiš**, Prime Minister, Czech Republic  
**Mette Frederiksen**, Prime Minister, Kingdom of Denmark  
**Micheál Martin**, Taoiseach, Republic of Ireland  
**Jüri Ratas**, Prime Minister, Republic of Estonia  
**Sanna Marin**, Prime Minister, Republic of Finland  
**Emmanuel Macron**, President of the Republic, French Republic  
**Angela Merkel**, Federal Chancellor, Federal Republic of Germany  
**Kyriakos Mitsotakis**, Prime Minister, Hellenic Republic  
**Viktor Orbán**, Prime Minister, Hungary  
**Giuseppe Conte**, Prime Minister, Italian Republic  
**Krišjānis Kariņš**, Prime Minister, Republic of Latvia  
**Gitanas Nausėda**, President, Republic of Lithuania  
**Xavier Bettel**, Prime Minister, Grand Duchy of Luxembourg  
**Robert Abela**, Prime Minister, Republic of Malta  
**Mark Rutte**, Prime Minister, Kingdom of the Netherlands  
**Mateusz Morawiecki**, Prime Minister, Republic of Poland  
**António Costa**, Prime Minister, Republic of Portugal  
**Klaus Werner Iohannis**, President, Romania  
**Igor Matovič**, Prime Minister, Slovak Republic  
**Janez Janša**, Prime Minister, Republic of Slovenia  
**Pedro Sánchez**, Prime Minister, Kingdom of Spain  
**Stefan Löfven**, Prime Minister, Kingdom of Sweden  
**Ursula von der Leyen**, President of the European Commission  
**Charles Michel**, President of the European Council  
**David Sassoli**, President of the European Parliament

*18 August 2020*

**Statement of the Steering Committee of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum ahead of the European Council video conference on the situation in Belarus, 19 August 2020**

- Whereas the presidential election held in the Republic of Belarus on 9 August 2020 were not free and democratic;
- Recognising the right of the citizens of the Republic of Belarus to express their disagreement with the election results, including through peaceful protests;
- Witnessing with grave concern the unprecedented level of violence and repression against protesters by the Belarusian authorities, including torture and inhuman treatment of detainees;
- Taking account of the presence of political prisoners and thousands of illegally arrested persons in the Republic of Belarus;
- Noting the proposal of the video conference of EU foreign ministers of 14 August 2020 on “EU support in establishing and facilitating a dialogue between the political authorities, opposition and broader society in view of resolving the current crisis”;

- Considering that the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the Republic of Belarus are inviolable;
- Insisting upon the need to resolve the current crisis peacefully;

The Steering Committee urges the European Union to:

1. State openly its non-acceptance of the results of the presidential election in the Republic of Belarus;
2. Recognise the Coordination Council for the Transfer of Power in Belarus (Координационный совет для обеспечения передачи власти в Беларуси), formed based on the initiative of presidential election candidate, Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, as a legitimate representation of the citizens of the Republic of Belarus – including its right to negotiate with the government of the Republic of Belarus on behalf of the protesters. The Council is currently being formed in an open and transparent way and will include highly qualified professionals from different economic and societal sectors from across the regions of the Republic Belarus;
3. Assist the Coordination Council in organising negotiations with the Belarusian authorities on the settlement of the current crisis;
4. Facilitate the release of all political prisoners, call on the Belarusian authorities to cease the unlawful detention of, and continued violence towards, detainees, and conduct an international investigation into crimes committed against peaceful protesters;
5. Reaffirm, in accordance with the principles of the Helsinki Final Act, its respect for the independence, sovereignty and existing borders of the Republic of Belarus, including the inadmissibility of the use of force, or the threat thereof, by any state.

***Members of the Steering Committee of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum***

*Zaur Akbar, Youth Club Public Union, Azerbaijan*

*Olga Chyzhova, Digital Communication Network, Estonia*

*Ina Coseru, National Environmental Center, Moldova*

*Lousineh Hakobyan, Europe in Law Association, Armenia*

*Mikayel Hovhannisyan, Eurasia Partnership Foundation, Armenia*

*Shahla Ismayil, Women's Association for Rational Development (WARD), Azerbaijan*

*Maksym Koriavets, Polissya Foundation for International and Regional Studies, Ukraine*

*Mikalai Kvantaliani, Association "New Group", Belarus*

*Natia Kuprashvili, Journalism Resource Center, Georgia*

*Adrian Lupusor, Expert-Grup, Moldova*

*Tatiana Marian, National Trade Union Confederation of Moldova*

*Sofia Strive, ForumCiv, Sweden*

*Yurii Vdovenko, Center for Cross-Border Cooperation, Ukraine*