

Conclusions by the President of the European Council following the video conference of the members of the European Council on 19 August 2020

Belarus

1. The members of the European Council discussed the situation in Belarus following the presidential elections on 9 August.
2. The EU has been following the developments in Belarus very closely and with increasing concern. The 9 August elections were neither free nor fair, therefore we do not recognise the results.
3. The people of Belarus have a right to determine their future. The members of the European Council express their clear solidarity with the people of Belarus in their desire to exercise their fundamental democratic rights.
4. The members of the European Council condemn the disproportionate and unacceptable violence displayed by the state authorities against peaceful protesters. Violence must be avoided and all those unlawfully detained must be immediately and unconditionally released. Civil society and opposition actors engaged in discussions of political transition must be protected from arbitrary arrests and violence. The EU expects a complete and transparent investigation into all alleged abuses.
5. The EU will shortly impose sanctions against a substantial number of individuals responsible for violence, repression and the falsification of election results.
6. Progress made in the past years in the relationship between the EU and Belarus is at risk. Any further deterioration of the situation will impact on our relationship and have negative consequences.
7. We call on the Belarusian authorities to find a way out of the crisis through an end to violence, de-escalation, and an inclusive national dialogue. Only a peaceful and democratic process, underpinned by independent and free media and a strong civil society, can provide sustainable solutions. All parties, including third states, should support such a process.
8. We will continue to follow the situation closely and stand ready to contribute to efforts to peacefully end the crisis. The EU fully supports OSCE proposals for dialogue in Belarus and is ready to provide assistance to further them.

Eastern Mediterranean

1. The situation in the Eastern Mediterranean and the relations with Turkey were raised by some Member States. We are increasingly concerned about the growing tensions and stressed the urgent need to de-escalate.
2. We expressed our full solidarity with Greece and Cyprus and recalled and reaffirmed our previous conclusions on the illegal drilling activities. We agreed to revert to these issues during our meeting in September. All options will be on the table.

Mali

1. The events in Mali are of deep concern and can have a destabilising impact on the entire region and on the fight against terrorism. The EU calls for an immediate release of prisoners and restoration of the rule of law.
2. The EU works in full coordination with African and international partners and supports ECOWAS efforts to find a solution in line with the aspirations of the Malian people.

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