



23 May 2021

We, the chairs of our respective national parliament's Foreign Affairs Committees, condemn unequivocally the threat of violence used against a civilian aircraft in the skies over Belarus. Using fighter aircraft to intercept a civilian Ryanair flight is an act of piracy on a route between two NATO and EU countries. This reckless act put the passengers and crew in grave danger. It is a reminder of the illegitimacy of the administration claiming authority in Minsk.

We call for an immediate inquiry to be held by the International Civil Aviation Organisation into this clear violation of free transit between states and the threats to the aircraft.

Until ICAO has reported, we call for Belarus to be suspended from the organisation and a ban on all overflight of Belarus including flights to and from the country. It is clear that the current administration in Minsk has no respect for the safety of our citizens and cannot be trusted to defend their rights. This act of state terror and kidnapping is a threat to all those who travel in Europe and beyond. It cannot be allowed to stand.

We call on NATO and European Union states to put sanctions on the Lukashenka regime and suspend their ability to use Interpol and other international organisations to further attack democracy in Europe. We call for free elections to be held under the supervision of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe. We call for the immediate and unconditional release of Raman Pratasevich and all other political prisoners.

Tyranny has no place in Belarus or in Europe. It threatens not only its own citizens but millions of others around the world.

Sen Pavel Fischer  
Chair, Czech Republic

Norbert Röttgen MdB  
Chair, Germany

Rihards Kols  
Chair, Latvia

Sen Bogdan Klich  
Chair, Poland

Sen Bob Menendez  
Chair, United States

Marko Mihkelson  
Chair, Estonia

Charlie Flanagan TD  
Chair, Ireland

Žygimantas Pavilionis  
Chair, Lithuania

Tom Tugendhat MP  
Chair, United Kingdom

