



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

*Brussels, 17.9.2020
C(2020) 6483 final*

Dear President,

The Commission would like to thank the Senát for its Opinion on the situation in Belarus prior to the presidential elections. The Commission is monitoring the situation very closely and takes seriously the concerns expressed in the Opinion.

Following the 9 August 2020 presidential elections, on 11 August the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy issued a declaration on behalf of the European Union. It stated that these elections had been neither free nor fair, called on the Belarusian authorities to stop the disproportionate and unacceptable violence against peaceful protesters, and expressed support to the Belarusian population in their desire for democratic change. The situation in Belarus was discussed on 14 August by the EU Ministers of Foreign Affairs and on 19 August by the members of the European Council. At that second meeting, President von der Leyen expressed notably the Commission's readiness to support Belarusian people in these challenging times. The EU will impose sanctions against a number of individuals responsible for violence, repression and the falsification of election results. Work on developing these sanctions is ongoing and was presented and further discussed at the Gymnich meeting with EU Foreign Ministers on 27 and 28 August.

The EU remains committed to strengthen its engagement with the Belarusian people and civil society. Only upholding human rights, democracy and free and fair elections will guarantee stability and sovereignty for Belarus. Human rights and democracy will remain at the forefront of the EU's considerations when shaping its policy towards the country.

The Commission looks forward to continuing the political dialogue with the Senát in the future.

Yours faithfully,

*Olivér Várhelyi
Member of the Commission
Miloš VYSTRČIL
President of the Senát
Valdštejnské náměstí 17/4
CZ – 118 01 PRAGUE 1*

*Maroš Šefčovič
Vice-President*

