

**TOPIC:** Belarus Border Conflict

**DELEGATE NAME:** Taha Usta

**COUNTRY:** Albania

The Belarusian Border Conflict is a migrant crisis consisting of an influx of tens of thousands of immigrants, primarily from Iraqi Kurdistan, with smaller groups hailing from elsewhere in Asia and from parts of Africa, to Lithuania, Latvia and Poland via those countries' borders with Belarus. The crisis was triggered by the severe deterioration in Belarus–European Union relations, following the 2020 Belarusian presidential election, the 2020–2021 Belarusian protests, the Ryanair Flight 4978 incident and subsequent sanctions on Belarus, as well as the attempted forced repatriation of Olympic sprinter Krystsina Tsimanouskaya from Japan.

The crisis began when Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko threatened Europe with bunch of illegal transactions such as drug dealing and human trafficking activities. Immigrants who arrived to Belarus were told to manipulate European Union’s officers with certain keywords. They were also provided with wire cutters and axes to cut open the border fences and enter Europe. However, those who did not manage to cross the border were often forced to stay there by Belarusian authorities, who were accused of assaulting some migrants who failed to get across. The Belarusian Goverment also declined humanitarian aid from Poland.

Poland, Lithuania, and Latvia declared a state of emergency and announced their decisions to build border walls on their borders with Belarus, with Poland approving an estimated € 353 million in spending to build a 60 kilometres barrier. The EU sent additional supporting officers and patrol cars to Lithuania, and 12 EU governments stated their support for a physical barrier along the border. Lithuania completed the 502 km barrier in August 2022 and the modern surveillance equipment was installed by the end of the year.

Albania strongly condemns any attempt to manipulate the refugee crisis for political gain. The use of vulnerable people as a political tool is inhumane and against international law. We urge all parties involved to find a peaceful resolution to this conflict and to prioritize the welfare of the refugees.

We stand ready to support any effort aimed at resolving this conflict and mitigating its impact on the region and its people. We will work closely with our international partners to ensure that this crisis is dealt with in a timely and effective manner.