

**Security Council**

Distr.: General
31 March 2023

Original: English

**Letter dated 30 March 2023 from the Permanent Representative of
Albania to the United Nations addressed to the President of the
Security Council**

I have the honour to convey to you the letter from Ms. Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, Head of the United Transitional Cabinet of Belarus and Leader of the Democratic Forces of Belarus, addressed to the Security Council (see annex) regarding the deployment of Russian nuclear forces on the territory of Belarus (see annex).

I would be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Ferit **Hoxha**
Permanent Representative of Albania to the United Nations



Annex to the letter dated 30 March 2023 from the Permanent Representative of Albania to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

**Letter addressed to the United Nations Security Council
Regarding the Deployment of Russian Nuclear Forces on the
Territory of Belarus**

by Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya

Head of the United Transitional Cabinet of Belarus, Leader of the Democratic Forces of Belarus

March 30, 2023

Mr. President,
Distinguished members of the UN Security Council,

I am writing to convey the real voice of the Belarusian people at the most important multilateral body for maintaining international peace and security. My task today is to speak about the grave threat which undermines the sovereignty of Belarus, jeopardizes its existence, and creates conditions for the global arms race.

As the presumptive winner in the presidential election of 2020, I must express deep concern about the decision of Russian president Putin to deploy nuclear weapons on the territory of Belarus against the will of our people.

Only the Russian interference in the internal affairs of Belarus allowed Lukashenka to stay in power after August 2020, through a brutal crackdown and systematic repressions that continue until today. That was the debt that Lukashenka is repaying.

In the so-called referendum of February 27, 2022 – just three days after the aggression against Ukraine had started from the territory of Belarus – Lukashenka forced the adoption of a new version of the Constitution that omitted the provision on nuclear free status of Belarus which had been proclaimed at the very outset of our independence in 1990.

Later, it was reported that Russia transferred nuclear delivery capabilities to Belarusian military – 10 modernized airplanes and Iskander mobile ballistic missile complex capable of launching nuclear munition.

We are deeply concerned that the Russian state that has repeatedly demonstrated its aggressive behavior towards our neighbors and far beyond, that has systematically disregarded its obligations under international law and its special responsibility as the permanent UNSC member, could launch a nuclear attack from the territory of Belarus which had greatly suffered the Chernobyl consequences and has no control over these weapons.

Since the political and humanitarian crisis in Belarus started in 2020, we called for decisive steps for its resolution before it would grow into a real threat to international peace and security. Since then, Lukashenka hijacked a foreign commercial plane, engineered a migration crisis on the border with the European Union, became a co-aggressor in the war against Ukraine and kept repressing thousands of Belarusians. Now, he allows Russians to use our land to resume the global arms race.

This negative development confirms that we were correct in numerous warnings that Lukashenka is a growing threat to international peace and security. It also confirms that Belarus has an essential role and place for the regional security. At the moment our country under the illegitimate Lukashenka is controlled and abused by Putin to threaten Ukraine and Transatlantic community. But Belarus should be viewed as a responsible partner in the international security system when Belarusians defeat tyranny and expel Russian troops.

Therefore, it is evident that “wait and see” is not a feasible approach. This deployment must be prevented, and the action must start here, at the Security Council, the body that the UN Charter set up “to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war”.

We urge the international community to demand from Russia to stop this threatening deployment and impose adequate and severe sanctions on the regimes of Lukashenka and Putin as outright threats to international peace and security.

We also urge the world to demand the withdrawal of the Russian military from Belarus and to cease Belarus' participation in the Russian aggression against Ukraine.

Finally, we side with the demand of Ukraine to strip the Russian Federation of the UNSC permanent member status. This should be just one of many acts in holding Russia accountable for its crime of aggression and war crimes in Ukraine and for repeatedly failing to meet its special responsibility in this Security Council.

I want to note that Putin announced the deployment of nuclear weapons on foreign territory in passing as if it were the opening of another tractor factory in some Russian province. This clearly shows his perception of Belarus' sovereignty as his backyard. Moreover, his interview was released on March 25, when Belarusians mark Freedom Day – the beginning of a modern Belarusian state in 1918. But this deliberate coincidence is also a wide miss by Putin.

Independence and sovereignty are the ultimate values for Belarusians, and we will not tolerate uninvited military presence on our land.
