



**The reasons for the aggression of the regime of Alexander Lukashenko (more broadly the Union State of Russia and Belarus) against Poland. What led to the situation on the Polish-Belarusian border?**

Since June 2021, the Belarusian regime of Alexander Lukashenko has been attracting foreigners from the Middle East, other regions of Asia and Africa who want to live in Europe, deceiving them with an allegedly easy route through Poland, and to a lesser extent also Lithuania and Latvia. This is organized by Belarusian special services using intermediaries, who are de facto devoid of honour criminals cheating their victims and responsible for their fate, including cases of deaths on the trail. A significant part of the money collected from migrants lands in companies linked to Lukashenko and his regime. The Belarusian dictator admitted himself that this was his way of earning and making up for the financial losses suffered as a result of the sanctions imposed on him by the European Union for crimes against his own nation. Russia is also behind Lukashenko and this practice. Belarus is part of the creation named Union of Belarus and Russia, which makes it a vassal of Russia, and its political and security structures are closely linked to Russian ones, without this being in line with the will of the Belarusian nation. Russia, on the other hand, has a centuries-old tradition of using people as weapons and treating them inhumanely, exemplified by deportations to Siberia, also known as "inhuman land". To these areas, where the eternal winter reigns, many Poles were chased under a Russian whip, along the path of death, thousands of kilometres long. In the times of the USSR, a network of labour camps was created there, called the Gulag, where people were treated as slaves. Forced migration engineering was also carried out, transporting entire nations in cattle wagons and resettling them elsewhere. This happened, among others, to the Muslim Crimean Tatars and Chechens in 1944. Earlier, between the years of 1864 and 1867, one and a half million Muslim Circassians were forced by Russia to flee across the Black Sea to Turkey and the Middle East. Modern Belarusian and Russian special forces are also modelled on these experiences, and the concept of forced migration engineering has entered the textbooks used for their training. This is no secret and anyone can verify it.

**Such actions by Russia and Belarus constitute a non-military means of combat, applied in this case against Poland. Thus, on the Polish-Belarusian border, we are dealing with the aggression of the regime of Alexander Lukashenko (more broadly the Union State of Russia and Belarus), below the threshold of war (hybrid threats/warfare), the aim of which is to create a humanitarian crisis to then achieve political and financial goals and**



## **benefits through information services (INFO OPS) and psychological pressures (PSY OPS).**

No one can therefore expect Poland to let in illegal migrants and be surprised at the use of force by Polish border guards and soldiers against those who want to invade Polish territory. From the very beginning, a significant part of these deceived and exploited migrants have come from Iraq, including in particular the Kurdistan Region. Arriving in Belarus, and storming the border with Poland afterwards, they are rarely aware that they are being used as tools in Operation "Sluice", which is directly aimed at Poland's national security. Its aim is also, in a broader sense, to destabilize Europe. Poland is determined to nullify these hostile plans against it. To this end, the Polish Border Guard, supported by units of the Polish army, resolutely prevents illegal border crossings, and people making these attempts should be aware that they will be treated as a threat to Poland's national security, regardless of their motivation.

### **Operation Sluice and Alexander Lukashenko Regime**

The concept of Operation "Sluice" was created already in 2010-2011, whereby the Belarusian regime at the time sought using the stimulation of migration towards the European Union to extort money from it (under the pretext of reimbursing the costs of border protection against illegal migration, which it organized itself). At the same time, this concept fits into the model of demographic weapons, i.e. the use of civilians, in the form of a migration stream, as a weapon against another country, in order to achieve specific strategic goals. In this model, civilians are not an attacking subject, but a tool. At the same time, the purposes of using demographic weapons may vary, e.g. obtaining a financial advantage (e.g. Turkey received 6 billion euros from the EU in 2015), concessions of political nature, destabilization of its opponent, etc.

In order to understand what objectives Belarus, and Russia behind it, intended to achieve, in the case of the operation launched in June 2021, it is necessary to know the broader context of events. Presidential elections were held in Belarus in August 2020. He has ruled this country since 1994. Alexander Lukashenko lost them (this is confirmed by independent data) but falsified the results and declared his victory. This sparked mass protests that were eventually brutally suppressed. Although, it may seem shocking to many Iraqi residents, Iraq is a more democratic and free country than Belarus. In Iraq, elections are not falsified and anyone can run in them, and the media are not subordinated to one political option. Already in 1999,



Lukashenko ordered the murder of his political competitors: Viktor Hanchar, Yury Zakharanko and Anatol Krasouski, as well as a journalist Dzmitry Zawadski. He then abolished all independent media, began persecuting the opposition, imprisoned many of his opponents, including several of his competitors in the last presidential election, and forced the others to emigrate. Many participants of protests, if they failed to leave for Poland or Lithuania, were sentenced to many years in prison (even 15 years). Iraqi residents know that protests are not a crime, as they have taken to the streets of Baghdad, Basra, Erbil, Soleimaniya and many other cities. In Belarus, this is officially considered treason and extremism.

The countries of the European Union did not recognize the results of these elections and announced the isolation of Lukashenko. The situation escalated when on May 23, 2021, a Ryanair plane flying through the Belarusian airspace from Athens to Vilnius was forced by Lukashenko's regime to land in Minsk under the threat of being shot down. This terrorist operation was carried out in order to arrest the Belarusian activist flying this plane - Roman Protasevich, who was later sentenced to 8 years in prison. The European Union responded by imposing numerous sanctions on the Belarusian regime, including a blockade of Belarusian airspace.

The launch of Operation "Sluice", i.e. the use of people brought from Iraq as a weapon, was Lukashenko's reaction to these actions of the EU. The immediate objective was to force the European Union to withdraw from the sanctions, stop supporting the Belarusian opposition, recognize the legality of his election and permit repressions. The paradox was that migrants trying to illegally cross the border and claiming to be refugees (although, apart from a few cases, they did not meet the conditions for being recognized as such), became the same tool that was to be used against those who were actually persecuted – Belarusian oppositionists. Poland could not allow this, so it blocked the border and with all its determination decided to nullify Lukashenko's plans. Unfortunately, the migrants lured by Lukashenko into the border trap paid for this as well. Many of them came from Iraq, including from the Kurdistan Region.

However, the objectives of Operation Sluice were broader. In September 2021, parliamentary elections were held in Germany, and the spectre of a repeat of the 2015 migration crisis was of great concern to Germany's political elites. Massive, uncontrolled migration causes a number of social problems, conflicts, terrorist threats and an increase in the popularity of extremist forces. Whether specific groups of migrants pose a real threat or not is irrelevant here, as the negative effects are the result of the convergence of various sociological



processes. In particular, there was concern that the new migration crisis would increase the popularity of the anti-immigrant, anti-Islam, far-right Alternative fur Deutschland (AfD) party, which is also the spokesman for Russian interests in Germany. The AfD's electoral success and the triggering of a political crisis, as well as social problems in Germany, would thus serve the interests of Russia and Belarus, and the very threat of triggering such a situation was to induce Germany, and thus the EU, to comply.

Operation "Sluice" was also supposed to discredit Poland in the eyes of international opinion and its partners, and also lead to an internal crisis through social polarization and undermining trust in state institutions. As for the first aspect, it was based on the assumption that if Poland did not fulfil its obligations as a border country of the Schengen area, it would become a frivolous and weak country in the eyes of EU partners, and therefore negotiations between Russia and Belarus and Europe to resolve the problem would take place without it. The decisive actions of the Polish Border Guard and the army thwarted this plan.

Unfortunately, this contributed to the spreading of lies about the alleged racism of Poland and the cruelty of Polish officers. Meanwhile, the Polish-Belarusian border is simply dangerous. Potential migrants must also remember that on the border there is a river in which it is easy to drown, very dangerous swamps and a dense forest in which wild animals live and it is easy to get lost in. There are known cases of people who lost their orientation in winter and froze, and were severely dehydrated in summer. Poland is not responsible for these tragic accidents, but wants to warn against them in order to avoid similar tragedies in the future.

### **Activities of Belarusian services – using migrants as a means of pressure**

On the Belarusian side, the local services regularly beat migrants and create dangerous situations that may result in tragedies. There are also well-documented cases where Belarusian services beat a man almost to death, and then push him over to the Polish side to die there, and the blame fall on Poland. All this to attract the attention of foreign media, creating the impression that the cause of the Gehenna of migrants is that Poland does not want to help them. The facts are that Polish officers are there to ensure the inviolability of the borders and defend the security of Poland, and not to organize rescue missions, because these would mean crossing the Polish-Belarusian border by Polish officers or soldiers in order to provide assistance to migrants, which would constitute an intrusion on to the territory of a foreign and, in addition, a hostile country, which is only waiting to cause a scandal and accuse Poland of aggression. Therefore, it has been and is out of the question. Even on the Polish



side, the search for the wounded is made difficult by the people in question themselves, because migrants flee from the help provided by officers or soldiers of the Republic of Poland, because this would mean interrupting their illegal journey to Germany (or further west), for which they have paid handsomely. Anyone who travels to Belarus must remember that the local services have guidelines to treat migrants in a brutal way and use them against Poland. No vision of a better life is worth such risks and suffering at the hands of Belarusian and Russian services. No one can blame Poland for this either.

An additional protection of the border is an electronic barrier stretching over a length of 206 km, which consists of a fence with a height of 5.5 meters, topped with barbed wire, together with a monitoring system. Any attempts to damage it constitute a crime and the perpetrators will be imprisoned for many years, then deported and will never be able to come to Poland or any other EU country. Crossing the border does not mean that such a person will be able to stay in Poland, as the Border Guard has the right to return illegal immigrants detained in the border area as part of the so-called push-backs to Belarus. Border Guard officers do this immediately after detention. At least several dozen people are turned back every day in this way. And only in the first half of 2023, 370 criminals helping to cross the border illegally were arrested.

Migrants brought to Belarus are directed not only to the border with Poland, but also to Lithuania and Latvia. In addition, Finland has also been attacked on its border with Russia. Therefore, it decided, following the example of Poland, to build a dam to block illegal migration. All these actions, whether on the part of Russia or Belarus, are part of a hybrid war against NATO countries, and those who are used by these terrorist countries for this purpose should be aware that they are therefore becoming part of this war, whether they want it or not. Therefore, we are trying to warn them against it.

All those arriving in Belarus with the intention of illegally crossing the border with Poland should be aware that relations between Russia and the dependent Lukashenko regime with Poland are hostile. Russia and Belarus are seeking to destabilize the internal situation in Poland by using migrants for this purpose. It is an element of conducted by Russia combat below the threshold of war, otherwise popularly referred to as "hybrid war". The influx of illegal migrants is expected to undermine public trust in state institutions such as, in particular, the Border Guard, the army and the police. Its objective is also to cause divisions among the society and radicalization of attitudes, which is further expected to lead to various acts of violence (also against immigrants).



The operation "Sluice" is also closely related to the Russian invasion on Ukraine. Therefore, anyone who arrives in Belarus with the intention of illegal migration should be aware that they are placing themselves in the middle of a bloody conflict in which tens of thousands of people have already died. It is like heading to Mosul during the war with Daesh and later complaining that it is dangerous.

Turning a stream of migrants against Poland had one more purpose, i.e. to test Poland's ability to accept refugees before Russia's planned invasion on Ukraine. It occurred only 8 months after the beginning of Operation "Sluice". At that time, Poles took in several million Ukrainian refugees. The Russian and Belarusian services hoped to discourage Polish society from helping refugees, knowing that soon millions of Ukrainian refugees would find themselves in Poland. They also wanted to involve the Republic of Poland apparatus and a large part of the services and army at the border to deprive them of their ability to respond to the situation in Ukraine and on the Polish-Ukrainian border. If Poland opened up to illegal migrants sent to it by Russia and Lukashenko, it would spend its resources on them and would not have such capabilities in relation to Ukrainians. And it is not about where some people came from and where the others did, but about the fact that in the case of Ukraine they were people fleeing the war, primarily women and children, and on the border with Belarus there were people who did not flee the war, the vast majority of them were men. Poland is aware that in Iraq, including the Kurdistan Region, there are many challenges to the security of the population, but there is no war going on there. Bombs do not fall on Basra, Baghdad, Erbil or Soleimani every day, and in the case of Ukraine this is just the case. The incitement of anti-immigrant sentiments, as a result of Operation "Sluice", was supposed to make it difficult to provide assistance to Ukrainian women and children fleeing bombs. Poland could not agree to this, as it would be immoral.

Directing a stream of illegal migrants to Poland is also supposed to serve as a veil for sabotage activities against Poland. These include terrorist activities conducted under a false flag, as well as border incidents involving Russian mercenaries. To this end, Russia has created camps of so-called Wagners in Belarus, near the border with Poland, which from the Polish perspective are bandits and terrorists. The Wagners, who carry out the orders of the Russian authorities (despite the fact that Russian leader Vladimir Putin ordered the elimination of their leader Prigozhin), also recruit a range of foreigners from the Middle East or Africa into their ranks. Their infiltration of the stream of migrants poses another real threat, and Poland must, above all, take care of the safety of its citizens. Therefore, in order to

support the Border Guard, 10,000 Polish soldiers were sent to the border with Belarus, as well as helicopters and armoured personnel carriers.

Public opinion polls in Poland clearly indicate that Poles accept actions taken at the border with Belarus in order to hinder illegal migration and expect the authorities to ensure the security and impermeability of the borders. Poland is a democratic country, which means that the authorities should act in a way that meets social expectations and take care above all of the security of the country and its citizens. This is normal for all countries, so no one can expect anything else from us. However, Poland does not want people lured on to its border by the criminal regime of Lukashenko and the imperial Russia supporting it to die there. We also do not want the disappointed hopes and suffering of the deceived to enrich the middlemen-bandits without honour. Therefore, we call for the abandonment of comings to Belarus in order to illegally cross the Polish border.

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