



REPUBLIC OF POLAND
PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Security Council High-level Open Debate
**“Peace and Security through Preventive
Diplomacy”**

Statement by the Republic of Poland

New York, 16 November 2021

Check Against Delivery

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Dear Mr. President, Distinguished Delegates,

Let me begin by thanking Mexico for organising this timely and important debate. Poland expresses its appreciation to all the briefers for their insightful and inspiring remarks.

Conflict prevention efforts do not make the headlines, but their main objective is for conflicts themselves not to become such. And this is what we all strive to accomplish here. Therefore, making preventive diplomacy work should be right at the heart of the 21st century multilateralism.

In this vein, Poland welcomes the focus of the Secretary-General's "Our Common Agenda" report on the system-wide coordination of prevention efforts. Effective preventive diplomacy requires cross-pillar commitment of the entire UN system and it is key that the UN adopts a preventive mind-set in all its activities.

Today's conflicts have become more complex and fluid, very often spreading across borders to affect broader regions. Their multi-faceted character requires taking into account not only political and military, but also socio-cultural, economic and environmental aspects of growing tensions and unrest.

Mr. President,

Investing in preventive diplomacy is especially urgent now because international community needs to have capabilities to identify and tackle some grave risks to our common security that are below the threshold of an outright military conflict. A good example of such a serious challenge is the modern weaponization of civilians who are currently trapped in the territory of Belarus. For months, Belarusian authorities have issued them visas and tricked them into flying thousands of kilometres, from countries that don't even border on Belarus, on a false promise that they were traveling to a "better future". Let me stress it again: all those people were admitted to Belarus with consent and knowledge of Belarusian authorities. By doing so, the Belarusian regime has unscrupulously engaged the country's apparatus to destabilize the situation in neighbouring countries, which qualifies as a hybrid attack against the EU and NATO through their eastern borders.

Belarus must assume its full responsibility for people whose arrival to its territory it has organised itself. Unfortunately, the Belarusian answers are a mix of denials, accusations and open threats. Minsk is not interested in reducing tensions and providing access to humanitarian assistance for people it legally admitted to its territory. The inhumane instrumentalization of people by Belarus is detrimental to finding effective solutions to the existing real, not-artificially created, refugee crises.

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Mr. President,

Poland strongly believes that now is the time for preventive diplomacy. We need to act before the situation spins out of control and the security and stability of the whole region deteriorates further. Therefore, we call on the international community: (1) not to participate in the Belarusian disinformation campaign, (2) to withdraw their support for this Belarusian policy in the international fora and (3) to assist in the process of dismantling the human trafficking network that contributed to triggering the crisis in the first place.

We must do all we can to prevent this type of hybrid actions from becoming a new practice of authoritarian regimes to achieve their political goals. These actions cannot set in as a new form of triggering international crises. We call on all those who stand behind the Belarusian regime to quit the policy of building tensions in favour of the policy of solving tensions.

There is a clear need for a more coherent, sustained cooperation between principal UN bodies. Poland calls for the Security Council's engagement in advancing proactive, integrated and forward-looking preventive diplomacy, in collaboration with the General Assembly, ECOSOC and the International Court of Justice. We stand ready to endorse any initiative within the UN framework aimed at strengthening conflict prevention.

Thank you.