**Joint Declaration of the Ministers of Interior**

**of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland**

**after the consultation meeting in Warsaw**

**Taking due account of regional security concerns, the Ministers of Interior of Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia and Poland met today, 28th August in Warsaw, to jointly assess the current situation in the field of security on the external EU border with Belarus and Russia.**

Since mid-2021 the four States have been facing the unprecedented irregular migration pressure provoked and artificially sustained by the Belarusian regime, clearly supported by Russia. This hybrid attack preceded the start of hostilities against Ukraine. Currently, the artificial migration route through Belarus enables Russia to make further attempts to destabilize our societies and the whole European Union.

**Due to the decisive actions of the Governments in the region, we have efficiently minimized the migratory pressure and protected the external EU border. We continue to jointly monitor the situation on the border with Belarus and Russia and remain aware that these two states can organize border provocations.**

We underline that we consider the activities undertaken by Russia backed by Belarus as their intentional attempts to destabilize the situation in the region. We firmly declare that we will jointly stand against them. Our response will be united, determined and appropriate to the situation, with the possibility of further isolation of both regimes by closing border crossing points. We are determined to protect the borders of the democratic world, while maintaining the access to our territories for Belarusian oppositionists.

**In this regard, we call upon Belarusian regime to remove the "Wagner" group from the Belarusian territories and withdraw all illegal migrants from the border areas and return them to their countries of origin.**

We hereby reaffirm that ensuring security at the external border of the EU with Russia and Belarus is one of the top priorities of our Governments. We stress that the cooperation between Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia and Poland in that regard is important for us and will be further developed.

**Mariusz Kamiński**

**Minister of the Interior and Administration of the Republic of Poland**

**Agnė Bilotaitė**

 **Minister of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania**

**Māris Kučinskis**

 **Minister for Interior of the Republic of Latvia**

**Lauri Läänemets**

**Minister of the Interior of the Estonian Republic**