Belarus: EU prolongs arms embargo and sanctions against 4 individuals for one year

On 22 February 2018, the Council decided to prolong the restrictive measures against Belarus for one year, until 28 February 2019. These measures include an arms embargo, ban on the export of goods for internal repression and an asset freeze and travel ban against four people listed in connection with the unresolved disappearances of two opposition politicians, one businessman and one journalist in 1999 and in 2000.

The Council also prolonged the derogation to the restrictive measures to allow the export of biathlon equipment to Belarus, which remain subject to prior authorisation by national competent authorities on a case by case basis. This derogation was extended to a limited number of specific-use sporting rifles and sporting pistols, subject to authorisation procedures.

The restrictive measures against Belarus were first introduced in 2004 in response to the disappearance of the four persons referred to above. The Council later adopted further restrictive measures against those involved in the violation of international electoral standards and international human rights law, as well as in the crackdown on civil society and democratic opposition. The arms embargo was introduced in 2011. On 15 February 2016, the Council decided to lift the restrictive measures against 170 individuals and four companies, while maintaining the arms embargo and the sanctions against the four persons.

The legal acts were adopted by written procedure. They will be published in the Official Journal of 23 February 2018.

- Factsheet - Relations between the EU and Belarus
- Council conclusions on Belarus of 15 February 2016
- Delegation of the EU to Belarus

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