

To:

High Representative of the European Union for Foreign and Security Affairs/ Vice-President of the Commission Josep Borrell

Foreign Affairs Minister of the Czech Republic Jan Lipavský

Brussels, 12 September 2022

Dear HR/VP Borrell,
Dear Minister Lipavsky,

We, the undersigned Members of the European Parliament, take note of the conclusions from the informal meeting of the EU Foreign Affairs Council on 31st of August about the suspension of the visa facilitation agreement between the EU and Russian Federation from 2007. This will, hopefully, reduce the number of tourists visas issued to Russian citizens to the EU and contribute to the European security.

This decision solely, however, will not address many social and security concerns that EU Members States experience in relation with the current situation of Russian citizens in the Schengen area.

A regional visa ban is a good, but partial solution. The EU as a community and a block of states should learn the lessons from the experience of bordering countries with Russia, like Finland, the Baltic states and Poland. The knowledge, as well as political and security concerns of these countries is a reasonable and a legitimate basis for an EU-wide agreement for a Russian tourists visa ban.

Since the EU-wide agreement on a visa-ban for all Russian citizens could not be reached at the recent informal meeting, we suggest that the Council considers another decision at the closest convenience. A compromise may consist of a decision to impose a ban for all members of Russian and Belarusian armed forces, including staff and family members, as well as for central administration clerks and their families. Such decision would send a clear signal that the social groups that are directly or indirectly related to the Russian state war efforts are not allowed to enter into the EU territory and take advantage of European freedoms and prosperity.

We trust that the debate on that matter is not yet finalised in the Council and that the new arguments and solutions may be considered.

Sincerely,

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