

Warsaw, 2021.08.27

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

19 avenue de la paix

1202 Geneva

Switzerland

To the attention of:

Mr Knut Doermann, Head of Delegation, Brussels

Mr Martin Schüepp, Regional Director for Europe & Central Asia

Mr Jean-Nicolas Paquet-Rouleau, Operations Coordinator Brussels, North and Central European countries

Dear Sirs,

We, Polish civil society organisations helping refugees and migrants, together with Polish citizens repressed during martial law in Poland in the 1980s, outraged by the fact that the Polish government is not fulfilling its legal obligations arising from international law with respect to the refugees stuck at the Polish-Belarusian border, **hereby call on you to immediately involve and help the people deprived of food, water, medical help and shelter at Usnarz Górny.**

For over two weeks a group of Afghan nationals has been living on the border, with Polish security services preventing them from formal crossing and Belarusian guards stopping them from turning back to the proper Belarusian territory. The border guards do not allow social organizations neither local people to provide refugees with food, medicine or other necessary things.

On 25th of August, the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) has issued interim measures calling on Poland to provide “food, water, clothing, adequate medical care and, if possible, temporary shelter” to groups of Afghans stuck on the border with Belarus. In response, the Polish prime minister announced that Poland was ready to provide humanitarian aid, but only from the Belarusian side, i.e. by crossing the border with Belarus.

The International Red Cross is the only international organisation which was allowed to help people in need during martial law in Poland in 1981. We, as people who cherish human rights and the tradition of Polish Solidarność, cannot agree and accept that there are children, women and men on the Polish border who are deprived of their basic rights and are de facto being tortured by intentional neglect by those in power.

Any political aspect of this situation is irrelevant at this stage. The further legal status of these people will need to be established under the proper rules on asylum. However, at this moment, they need urgent medical help to survive.

We can provide all the necessary logistic and factual information needed to effectively help the refugees who are being forced to stay on the border.

Yours faithfully,

Civil society organisations
helping refugees and migrants

1. Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights.
2. Legal Intervention Association.
3. The Polish Migration Forum Foundation.
4. "Our Choice" Foundation.
5. Migrant Info Point (Foundation Center for Migration Research).
6. Nomada Association.
7. Homo Faber.

Polish citizens repressed during martial law in Poland in
the 1980s

1. Bazydło Janusz
2. Bortnowska Halina
3. Bujak Zbigniew
4. Cywińska Izabella
5. Frasyński Władysław
6. Gauden Grzegorz
7. Grzelak Janusz
8. Handzlik Stanisław
9. Illg Jerzy
10. Janas Zbigniew
11. Jankowska Janina
12. Kleyff Jacek
13. Kossakowski Marek
14. Kowalski Sergiusz
15. Król Krzysztof
16. Kulik-Bielińska Ewa
17. Labuda Barbara
18. Lipska-Onyszkiewicz Agnieszka
19. Maj Bronisław
20. Majewski Henryk
21. Malak Barbara
22. Nowak Edward
23. Pawlak Antoni
24. Samoliński Wojciech
25. Sokołowski Andrzej
26. Staniszevska Grażyna
27. Stanowski Krzysztof
28. Stępień Jerzy
29. Szczęsna Joanna
30. Wujec Ludwika
31. Zdrada Jerzy