

Kremlin Hails EU-Belarus Contact Over Migrant Crisis

By [AFP](#)

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Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov. **Sergei Kiselev / Moskva News Agency**

Russia on Wednesday welcomed direct talks held between EU and Belarus officials over a migrant crisis on the Polish border.

"It is very important that contact has been made between representatives of the EU and the leadership of Belarus," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said, days after German Chancellor Angela Merkel discussed the issue with Belarus leader Alexander Lukashenko.

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Russian President Vladimir Putin had called on the West to speak directly to his ally Lukashenko, increasingly isolated since violently suppressing opposition protests last year.

Merkel called Lukashenko on Monday to discuss the situation on the Poland–Belarus border, where thousands of migrants have gathered in a crisis the EU blames on Minsk.

It was Lukashenko's first phone call with a Western leader since last year's protests, that erupted over an election that the EU says he rigged.

EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell had also discussed the crisis with Belarus foreign minister Vladimir Makei.

The Kremlin said Putin and Lukashenko discussed "possible solutions" for the crisis on Tuesday.

Poland and Brussels allege that Lukashenko engineered the crisis, luring migrants from the Middle East to the EU's doorstep as revenge for sanctions against his regime over the protests.

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