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Poland to Reopen Border With Belarus

By AFP

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A crossing at the Polish-Belarusian border in in Polowce-Pieszczatka. **Wojtek Radwanski / AFP**

Poland will reopen its border with Belarus this week, Prime Minister Donald Tusk said Tuesday, two weeks after it was sealed during Russian-led military exercises.

The closure of the border was announced on Sept. 9, ahead of the Zapad-2025 exercise, in which forces from Russia and Belarus simulated war with the West.

"The end of these maneuvers reduces, I wouldn't say eliminates, but reduces the various risks associated with the aggressive attitude of our eastern neighbors," Tusk said.

"So, between Wednesday and Thursday at midnight, the border crossings will be opened," he told a news conference.

"If necessary, if tensions or the aggressive behavior of certain neighbors intensify, we will not hesitate to make the decision to close the border crossings again. But, for now, it seems that these direct reasons have disappeared."

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Just ahead of the war games, Poland also complained of Russian drones violating its airspace and fellow NATO powers have warned Moscow against further escalation.

Poland has also recently accused Belarus of encouraging undocumented migrants from outside Europe to cross the border.

But the closure, which included rail crossings, also disrupted a major overland trade route bringing Chinese goods into Europe, to Beijing's concern.

During a visit to Warsaw on Sept. 15, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi was briefed on the reasons for the border closure by his Polish counterpart Radoslaw Sikorski.

Belarus, a former Soviet republic, is a key ally of Russia and allowed Moscow to use its territory to launch its invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.

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