

P R E S S E S T A T E M E N T

Save the Children calls for immediate support to children and families stranded at the EU border with Belarus

Berlin/Brüssel, 9. November 2021 – With the recent escalation at the Poland-Belarus border, where a large group of migrants and refugees, including children, are stuck in makeshift camps and struggling with hypothermia, hunger and exhaustion, Save the Children is calling on states to ensure their safety and to provide them with immediate support.

Anita Bay, Save the Children Europe Director, said:

“What is happening at the border of Belarus is against EU law and values. Children stranded near the border with Poland, Lithuania and Latvia since the end of August have been struggling with hypothermia, exhaustion and hunger, while their mental and physical health have deteriorated from their perilous journeys and the drawn-out situation they’re facing. We’ve seen footage of entire families pushed back to Belarus, and their request for international protection and immediate help ignored.

“It is unacceptable that the lives of children and their families are being used as a bargaining chip in a regional conflict. Ignoring their rights and the dangers they face isn’t a solution. Instead, it leads to violence, abuse and death.”

“We’re calling on the EU to provide these children and families with access to EU territories so they can request international protection in Europe. States must provide food, water, clothing, adequate medical care and shelter to those stranded, as ordered by the European Court of Human Rights at the end of August this year. Pushbacks at borders must immediately end and all children must be guaranteed rights to the protection, care and support they desperately need. NGOs must also be granted access to border areas without delay to support those in need and to monitor the situation.”

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Über Save the Children

Im Nachkriegsjahr 1919 gründete die britische Sozialreformerin und Kinderrechtlerin Eglantyne Jebb Save the Children, um Kinder in Deutschland und Österreich vor dem Hungertod zu retten. Heute ist die inzwischen größte unabhängige Kinderrechtsorganisation der Welt in 120 Ländern tätig. Save the Children setzt sich ein für Kinder in Kriegen, Konflikten und Katastrophen. Für eine Welt, die die Rechte der Kinder achtet. Eine Welt, in der alle Kinder gesund und sicher leben und frei und selbstbestimmt aufwachsen und lernen können – seit über 100 Jahren.