



Mr. Didier Reynders
The European Commissioner for Justice
Rue de la Loi / Wetstraat 200
1049 Brussels, Belgium

In Brussels 27 March 2024

Dear Commissioner Reynders,

We, the undersigned members of the European Parliament, in view of new information in Jozef Chovanec case, reflecting your letter of 07 July 2022 Nr. (2022)3425223, in which you expressed your serious concerns regarding the state of the investigations and based on reassurance, that the European Commission services are paying close attention to further developments, would like share our following concerns:

Expecting the concrete decision by the Charleroi Council Chamber whether the 31 defendants, including many police officers, would be sent back to the criminal court, we were concerned by fact, that **the Council decision has been postponed indefinitely**. Information comes few weeks after Belgian prosecutor's office decided to drop charges against a total of 31 people.

We are aware of the subsidiarity principle and the responsibility of Member states in the area of justice, but at the same time we are convinced that our European interest is to ensure the rule of law is upheld and the fundamental rights are respected everywhere in the same way. We are expecting, that perpetrators should be referred to the Criminal Court for a justice judicial trial.

We trust that the Belgian authorities will make every effort to achieve a fair and objective assessment of the degree of individual responsibility however, the length of the investigation and the fact that not a single charge has yet been brought does not bring a lot of light and trust in the process. We still believe, that we can prevent situation, when Slovakia will be pushed to appeal this case to the European Court of Human Rights against Belgium.

We thank you for your understanding of the seriousness of the situation and for your interest in this matter.

With kind regards,

Ivan ŠTEFANEC (EPP, Slovakia)
Jozef MIHÁL (RENEW, Slovakia)
Eugen JURZYCA (ECR, Slovakia)
Katarína ROTH NEVEĎALOVÁ (NI, Slovakia)
Miriam LEXMANN (EPP, Slovakia)
Vladimír BILČÍK (EPP, Slovakia)
Peter POLLÁK (EPP, Slovakia)
Lucia ĎURIŠ NICHOLSONOVÁ (RENEW, Slovakia)