

## An Appeal from Central Europe

We are facing a humanitarian crisis on an enormous scale. Hundreds of thousands of refugees from the Middle East and Africa are attempting to reach Europe in search of safety, hope, and the chance to lead a normal life. Not so long ago, we were the ones knocking on Europe's door.

We must not deny them our help. Regrettably, there are many in our region who disagree. After 1989, there were doubts in the European Community regarding the capacity of Central European countries, from the Baltic States through Romania and Bulgaria, to integrate with the West, owing to our history, political traditions, and the state of our economies. Yet, our part of Europe has not been the principal cause of the threats to the Union in this difficult decade.

But this rift within a united Europe resurfaces today. This time it has a moral dimension. It is true, we are not accountable for the instability and collapse of refugees' home countries. We are not the ones who have turned them into states plagued by incessant fear, where people are at risk of violent death, and where human life is "solitary, poor, brutish, and short." Unlike the former colonial and imperial powers that took in large numbers of immigrants after the Second World War, have little experience of co-existing with people of different cultures, from far-off lands.

Nonetheless, as human beings, we have a duty to show compassion and to provide them with assistance. This is also our duty as Europeans. The European community was founded on the principle of solidarity. Today we must not refuse to take joint responsibility for the Union, nor turn a blind eye to human suffering and the situation of countries most affected by the rising tide of migration.

In refusing to help, we deny the idea of European solidarity. Furthermore, we undermine the solidarity that other nations have shown towards our countries. That would erode the foundations on which, for the past 25 years, we have been building our security, our prospects for development and our hope of escaping the historical tribulations of war, foreign rule, and poverty.

In the name of our humanity, our principles and values, we call upon the authorities and people of our region to demonstrate practical solidarity towards refugees so that they may find safe haven in our midst and enjoy freedom to choose their own future.

1. **Bronisław Komorowski**, president of Poland from 2010 to 2015
2. **Aleksander Kwaśniewski**, president of Poland from 1995 to 2005

3. **Jerzy Baczyński**, editor-in-chief of the „Polityka” weekly, Poland
4. **Gordon Bajnai**, former prime minister, Hungary
5. **Mirosław Bałka**, sculptor, Poland
6. **Zuzana Bargerova**, lawyer, Human Rights League, Slovakia
7. **Zygmunt Bauman**, sociologist, University of Leeds, Poland-Great Britain
8. **Igor Blaževič**, founder of One World Festival
9. **Uldis Bērziņš**, poet and interpreter, Latvia
10. **Henryka Bochniarz**, president of Konfederacja Lewiatan, Poland
11. **Michał Boni**, member of European Parliament, former minister of administration and digitalization, Poland
12. **Marek Borowski**, senator, former finance minister, vice prime minister and Marshal of the Sejm
13. **Bogdan Borusewicz**, marshall of the Senate, Poland
14. **Martin Bútora**, sociologist, adviser to the president, Slovakia
15. **Bogusław Chrabota**, editor-in-chief of the „Rzeczpospolita” daily, Poland
16. **Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz**, former prime minister, Poland
17. **Liudas Dapkus**, deputy editor-in-chief of the “Lietuvos rytas” daily, Lithuania
18. **Aleš Debeljak**, poet and essayist, Slovenia
19. **Pavol Demeš**, former minister of foreign affairs, Slovakia
20. **Tibor Dessewffy**, president of DEMOS Hungary, Hungary
21. **Ivaylo Ditchev**, professor of social science, writer, Bulgaria
22. **Magda Faltová**, director, Association for Integration and Migration, Czech Republic
23. **Władysław Frasyniuk**, former dissident and member of parliament, Poland
24. **Rajko Grlić**, director, Croatia
25. **István Gyarmati**, diplomat, Hungary
26. **Tomáš Halík**, theologian and writer, Czech Republic
27. **Agnes Heller**, philosopher, Hungary
28. **Agnieszka Holland**, director, Poland
29. **Štefan Hríb**, editor-in-chief, “.týždeň.” weekly, Slovakia
30. **Michal Hvorecký**, writer, Slovakia
31. **Ivars Ījabs**, political scientist, Latvia
32. **Josef Jařab**, former senator, rector emeritus of Palacký University in Olomous, Czech Republic
33. **Leszek Jażdżewski**, editor-in-chief of the „Liberté!” quarterly, Poland
34. **Jerzy Jedlicki**, historian of ideas, former dissident, Poland

35. **Jana Juráňová**, writer, Slovakia
36. **Aleksander Kaczorowski**, journalist and essayist, Poland
37. **Éva Karádi**, editor-in chief of the „Magyar Lettre Internationale” quarterly, Hungary
38. **Dávid Korányi**, former undersecretary of state, deputy director of the Dinu Patriciu Eurasia Center, Hungary-United States
39. **János Kornai**, Professor Emeritus, Harvard University and Corvinus University of Budapest, Hungary
40. **András Kováts**, director, Menedék - Hungarian Association for Migrants, Hungary
41. **Dominika Kozłowska**, editor-in-chief of the „Znak” monthly, Poland
42. **Ivan Krastev**, chairman of the Centre for Liberal Strategies, Bulgaria
43. **Marcin Król**, historian of ideas, University of Warsaw, Poland
44. **Andrius Kubilius**, former prime minister, Lithuania
45. **Jarosław Kuisz**, editor-in-chief of the “Kultura Liberalna” internet weekly, Poland
46. **Ewa Kulik-Bielińska**, director of the Stefan Batory Foundation, chairman of the European Foundation Centre
47. **Tomasz Lis**, editor-in-chief of the „Newsweek Polska” weekly, Poland
48. **Ondřej Liška**, former minister of education, chairman of the Green Party, Czech Republic
49. **Ewa Łętowska**, former ombudsman, Poland
50. **Vita Matiss**, political analyst, essayist, Latvia
51. **Jiří Menzel**, director, Czech Republic
52. **Adam Michnik**, editor-in-chief of the „Gazeta Wyborcza” daily, Poland
53. **Piotr Mucharski**, editor-in-chief of the “Tygodnik Powszechny” weekly, Poland
54. **Alvydas Nikžentaitis**, president of Lithuanian National Historians Committee, Lithuania
55. **Zbigniew Nosowski**, editor-in-chief of the „Więź” monthly, Poland
56. **Janina Ochojska**, president of Polish Humanitarian Action, Poland
57. **Andrzej Olechowski**, former finance minister and minister of foreign affairs, Poland
58. **Jurica Pavičić**, writer, Croatia
59. **Márta Pardavi**, co-chair, Hungarian Helsinki Committee, Hungary
60. **Solomon Passy**, former minister of foreign affairs, Bulgaria
61. **Jiří Pehe**, political scientist and writer, Czech Republic
62. **Petr Pithart**, former prime minister, Czech Republic
63. **Adam Pomorski**, president of the Polish PEN Club, Poland
64. **Wojciech Przybylski**, editor-in-chief “Respublica Nowa” and “Eurozine”, Austria-Poland
65. **László Rajk jr.**, architect, designer and political activist, Hungary
66. **Rein Raud**, author and cultural theorist, Estonia

67. **Adam Daniel Rotfeld**, former minister of foreign affairs, Poland
68. **Martin Rozumek**, director, Organization for Aid to Refugees, Czech Republic
69. **Andrzej Seweryn**, theatre actor and director, Poland
70. **Sławomir Sierakowski**, director of the Institute for Advanced Studies, Poland
71. **Martin Milan Šimečka**, writer, journalist, Slovakia-Czech Republic
72. **Marta Šimečková**, journalist, interpreter, Slovakia
73. **Karel Schwarzenberg**, former minister of foreign affairs, Czech Republic
74. **Aleksander Smolar**, chairman of the Stefan Batory Foundation, Poland
75. **Ladislav Snopko**, playwright, former minister of culture, Slovakia
76. **Andrzej Stasiuk**, writer, Poland
77. **Petruška Šustrová**, former dissident, Czech Republic
78. **Jerzy Szacki**, sociologist, University of Warsaw, Poland
79. **Małgorzata Szczęśniak**, set designer, Poland
80. **Monika Sznajderman**, editor, Wydawnictwo Czarne, Poland
81. **Soňa Szomolányi**, political scientist and sociologist, Slovakia
82. **Erik Tabery**, editor-in-chief of the „Respekt” weekly, Czech Republic
83. **Béla Tarr**, director, Hungary
84. **Stefan Tafrov**, diplomat, human rights activist, Bulgaria
85. **Vesna Teršelič**, direktore dokumenta - centrs, kas nodarbojas ar pagātni, Slovēnija
86. **Róża von Thun und Hohenstein**, member of European Parliament, Poland
87. **Dubravka Ugrešić**, poet and essayist, Croatia
88. **Rimvydas Valatka**, journalist, former member of parliament, Lithuania
89. **Magdaléna Vášáryová**, member of parliament, Slovakia
90. **Tomas Venclova**, poet, Lithuania
91. **Krzysztof Warlikowski**, theatre director, Poland
92. **Jakub Wygnański**, chairman of the board, Unit for Social Innovation and Research – Shipyard, Poland
93. **Adam Zagajewski**, poet and essayist, University of Chicago, Poland-United States
94. **Péter Zilahy**, writer, Hungary
95. **Andrzej Zoll**, former president of the Constitutional Tribunal, Poland