

Readout of the telephone conversation between President Charles Michel and Russian President Vladimir Putin

With a view to the European Council meeting of 25 and 26 March a phone call between the President of the European Council Charles Michel and President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin took place on Monday 22 March 2021.

The Presidents discussed relations between the EU and Russia.

President Michel expressed the view that EU-Russia ties are at a low point and confirmed the EU's approach of the five guiding principles, based on the EU's core values.

There is currently disagreement in many areas.

From the EU perspective, the relationship with Russia can only take a different direction if there is sustained progress on issues like the implementation of the Minsk agreements, stopping hybrid and cyber-attacks on Member States and respect for human rights. In this context Alexey Navalny's case was raised. Charles Michel reiterated the EU's call on the Russian authorities to release Mr Navalny and proceed with a transparent investigation into the assassination attempt on him.

The leaders also exchanged views on the Covid pandemic, on vaccines and on regional and global issues.

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