

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002846/25
to the Commission
Mariusz Kamiński (ECR)
(11 July 2025)**

Subject: Belarusian airline Belavia's circumvention of EU sanctions by purchasing Airbus A330 aircraft

In May 2021, Lukashenka's regime used false information about a bomb threat to force a Ryanair plane to land in Minsk under fighter jet escort. This hijacking was a flagrant violation of international law and also formed part of the brutal repression of the Belarusian democratic opposition. In February 2022, Belarus supported Russia's military aggression against Ukraine. In response to these actions, the EU imposed a number of sanctions, including a ban on Belarusian airlines using EU airspace and purchasing aircraft, as well as restrictions on access to leasing and spare parts.

Despite the imposition of these sanctions, the Belarusian carrier Belavia recently acquired three Airbus A330-200 aircraft in a secret deal, most likely mediated by a company based in the United Arab Emirates, from the Gambian airline Magic Air, previously operated by the Turkish airline Onur Air ⁽¹⁾. The operation was aimed at circumventing EU sanctions and rebuilding Belavia's operational capacity, as the company's fleet had been cut in half as a result of sanctions. The resumption of long-haul flights to China and South-East Asia would be a propaganda success for the regime, much as the acquisition itself is already being portrayed ⁽²⁾.

1. Is the Commission familiar with the details of the transaction for the purchase of A330 aircraft by Belavia, and is it currently carrying out an investigation into the circumvention of EU sanctions?
2. What measures does the Commission plan to take to prevent the Belarusian or Russian authorities from using similar mechanisms in the future?
3. What measures will the Commission take to prevent Belavia from putting these aircraft into operation, which media sources report is planned for late 2025?

Submitted: 11.7.2025

**Answer given by Ms Albuquerque on behalf of the European Commission
(11 September 2025)**

The Commission is aware of public reports about the sale of three Airbus A330-200 aircraft to Belavia. EU sanctions on Belarus ⁽¹⁾ prohibit EU operators from providing services, like maintenance, and from making any other economic resources available to listed persons or entities, including Belavia.

Sale or supply of aircraft to or for use in Belarus is also prohibited. These sanctions apply to EU operators and persons doing business within the EU. Based on reports available to the Commission, it seems that the sale was conducted outside of EU jurisdiction.

Member States are responsible for implementation and enforcement of EU sanctions, including conducting investigations into potential non-compliance cases, including for sanctions circumvention, should information available to them point in that direction.

In general, tackling the circumvention of EU sanctions through third countries is a top priority for the EU. The Commission continuously monitors trade flows of sanctioned goods to third countries and works closely with the Member States to identify suspicious transactions.

Together with the EU Sanctions Envoy, it actively engages with third countries to ensure their jurisdictions are not used as platforms for circumvention.

Where appropriate, the Commission, together with High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, can propose new sanctions.

This includes the imposition of sanctions on new targets, such as persons responsible for circumvention. Adoption of sanctions requires the unanimous approval of all 27 Member States.

¹ <https://aerospacglobalnews.com/news/belavia-airbus-a330-acquisiton/> <https://onemileatatime.com/news/sanctioned-belavia-a330-smuggled-fake-gambian-airline/>

² <https://en.belavia.by/news/4891013/>

⁽¹⁾ Council Regulation (EC) No 765/2006 of 18 May 2006 concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Belarus and the involvement of Belarus in the Russian aggression against Ukraine.