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YEPP Council Statement

The Interference of the Russian Intelligence in the Czech Republic

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Relating to the recent reports, we strongly condemn the actions of Russian GRU intelligence services, which lead to the explosion of an arms depot in the Czech Republic in 2014 and in which two Czech citizens were killed. This event and other attacks, such as the poisoning of Sergei and Yulia Skripal in the United Kingdom in 2018, illustrate Russia's hostile attitude towards sovereign Member States. Moreover, such a behaviour fits into a broader pattern of Russian subversive campaigns, including espionage, cyberattacks and information operations targeting other countries. We are convinced that the Russian government uses a variety of available means to undermine the unity of the EU.

We express our full solidarity with the Czech Republic and stand by the European Parliament leaders' decision to call on the EU member states and the Council to adopt a strong, coordinated and concrete action towards Russia in response to this attack. The response should include securing assistance to Czech citizens in Russia in case when operating the Czech embassy is paralyzed by Russian actions, and the expulsion of recognized members of Russian intelligence services from EU and NATO member states. We believe that today's strong and decisive reaction will not only be a gesture of solidarity among Member States, but that it can also serve as a deterrent for potential similar acts in the future and contribute to a more secure Europe.