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Prime Minister Alexander De Croo
Wetstraat 16
1000 Brussels
Belgium

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Dear Prime Minister,

**I am writing to express my concern about the Belgian government’s failure to provide shelter and other essential goods and services to people seeking asylum in Belgium, in violation of its international human rights obligations.**

As a result of this failure, at least 3’000 people are destitute. As there are not enough places in homeless shelters, many asylum seekers have no other choice than to sleep on the streets or in makeshift tents. Several informal settlements have emerged, with people making shelters using cardboard and other materials. The police continue to dismantle and clear out these makeshift settlements, in some situations without providing alternative shelter. With winter here, and temperatures plummeting below zero, I am increasingly concerned for the health, safety and welfare of these people who are denied shelter.

The Belgian government has failed to provide a sufficient number of places for asylum seekers for more than two years, which has resulted in a reception crisis. Over this time, the government has been ordered more than 8’800 times by courts, including the European Court of Human Rights, to provide adequate shelter to asylum seekers. Yet the Belgian government has consistently refused to comply with these rulings, showing a highly worrying disrespect for the rule of law.

**I urge you to take all necessary measures to end this reception crisis and the ongoing human rights violations of people seeking asylum in Belgium. This can be done by activating a dispersal plan, as introduced in Belgian law in 2015, which would result in additional reception capacity being provided across municipalities. If the dispersal plan is activated, it is essential that the federal government provides the necessary support to those local authorities that create additional reception places.**

Yours sincerely,

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**Copie**

Botschaft des Königreichs Belgien, Weltpoststrasse 4, 3015 Bern, E-Mail: bern@diplobel.fed.be