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# POLAND'S PUSHBACK DRIVE AND EU ASYLUM □□□□□□□□□□ PLAN PUT RIGHTS □□□ A CLIFF EDGE', WARNS EUROPE'S TOP RIGHTS CHIEF

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EU Observer (21 September 2026)

Nikolaj NIELSEN

Europes human rights framework is on a cliff edge and risks unravelling everything achieved since World War Two, following fresh Polish and EU efforts to restrict asylum, according to Europes top rights defender.

Political leaders really have to become much more sensitive to how fragile the moment is, or to put it another way, the extent to which were on a cliff edge, said Michael OFlaherty, who is the human rights commissioner at the Council of Europe, a rights watchdog based in Strasbourg.

Speaking to EUobserver on Monday (21 September), OFlaherty was responding to recent initiatives by Poland to loosen UN rules on pushbacks, which are illegal.

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