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Publication | 07.11.2007

Conclusions of the 20th EU-Russia Summit in Mafra on 26 October 2007

Greens/EFA motion for a resolution

Tabled by ***Daniel Cohn-Bendit, Bart Staes, Milan Horá?ek, Hélène Flautre, Marie Anne Isler Béguin and Angelika Beer***

on behalf of the Greens/EFA Group

The European Parliament,

 having regard to its previous resolutions on the Russian Federation, in particular those of 26 April 2007 and 10 May 2007,

 having regard to the EU-Russia Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, which entered into force in 1997 and expires at the end of 2007,

 having regard to the EU-Russia human rights consultations,

 having regard to Rule 103(2) of its Rules of Procedure,

A. whereas, in spite of the increasing misunderstanding and mistrust on fundamental political issues, the trade and economic relations between the EU and Russia are steadily growing,

B. whereas no agreement has yet been reached on how to overcome the deadlock on the ban on Polish meat exports to Russia; whereas this is still preventing the EU from starting negotiations on a new agreement that is due to replace the present Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, which is about to expire,

C. whereas it is of the utmost importance for the EU to adopt a common position and refrain from accepting Russian offers to step up bilateral relations with the most willing of the Member States; whereas, on the other hand, Member States should act responsibly and even-handedly, refraining from using their power of veto,

D. whereas this month the US formally presented to NATO and Russia new concessions in order to gain Russian support for the anti-ballistic missile shield the US intends to deploy in Poland and the Czech Republic; whereas the EU should have a say in those talks and make every effort to reach a common position on this matter, which affects its overall security and could jeopardise its foreign policy,

E. whereas the general elections in December and presidential elections next spring represent an important

test for Russia, which has a chance to prove that the process of erosion of human rights and democratic liberties that has taken place over recent years and the growing self-censorship and government control of the media can be reversed,

F. whereas the investigations into the series of killings of journalists, in particular the murder of Anna Politkovskaya, have brought no result, showing the inability of the police and the judiciary to find and prosecute those responsible for these crimes,

G. whereas, as a member of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Council of Europe, the Russian Federation is committed to respecting freedom of speech and of assembly; whereas the EU is supposed to share with Russia a strategic partnership based on the values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law,

H. whereas energy continues to play a central and strategic role in EU-Russia relations; whereas the EU's strong dependence on fossil fuels undermines the development of a balanced and coherent European approach vis-à-vis Russia,

I. whereas this lack of coherence is widely reflected in the timid criticism by the Council and the Commission of human rights violations in Russia, which are rarely, or very weakly, raised in bilateral meetings,

J. whereas peace and stability in the common neighbouring countries are in the interest of both Russia and the EU; whereas new tensions have arisen in Abkhazia and South Ossetia and no progress has been made towards resolving the other 'frozen conflicts',

1. Takes the view that at this stage the partnership with the Russian Federation can only be of a pragmatic nature; believes, nevertheless, that every effort must be made to engage and challenge Russia in a constructive and open way with a view to starting negotiations on a new and far-reaching agreement based on genuinely shared common values and interests;

2. Welcomes in this regard, in spite of the limited results achieved at the summit, the positive and constructive atmosphere of the meeting and the subsequent encouraging statements that could lead to the unblocking of the situation in the near future;

3. Stresses once more, in this respect, that democracy and human rights must be at the core of any future agreement with the Russian Federation, with regard, in particular, to the definition and inclusion of an effective and operational human rights clause, and that the quality and depth of future relations depend on the respect and support for such values;

4. Reiterates its call for the stepping-up of the EU-Russia human rights consultations so as to make them more effective, result-oriented and open to NGOs and with the full involvement of the European Parliament at all levels;

5. Notes with concern, in this regard, the Russian authorities' reluctance to engage in a genuine dialogue with the European Parliament on human rights issues, failing both to participate in the meetings of the Subcommittee on Human Rights preparing the EU-Russia Consultations on Human Rights and to host in 2007 a delegation of the Subcommittee;

6. Takes note of President Putin's announcement in Mafra that Russia is planning to set up a think tank for freedom and democracy in Brussels or in another EU capital with the aim of monitoring human rights in the European Union and countering non-governmental organisations' activities in his country; takes the view that such an initiative could pave the way for a common and shared understanding of democracy and

human rights, provided that the EU is allowed to set up a similar think tank in Moscow;

7. Urges the Council and the Commission to call on the Russian Federation to ratify Additional Protocol 14 to the European Convention on Human Rights;

8. Expresses its concern as regards the freedom of expression and of assembly and press freedoms in the run-up to the forthcoming parliamentary elections and presidential elections; calls on the Russian authorities to make every effort to guarantee and ensure a free and fair election for all the political forces and balanced access to the media;

9. Draws attention to the difficult working conditions in the Russian Federation for foreign correspondents, whose freedom of movement is often hindered in some parts of the country and who are sometimes subjected to pressure and intimidation by local authorities and law enforcement officers; calls on the Council and the Commission to do their utmost to protect foreign journalists and facilitate their work;

10.Regrets, in this regard, the Russian authorities' delay in issuing an election observation invitation to the OSCE, which will prevent a long-term mission, and their allowing only a restricted number of OSCE observers to monitor the parliamentary elections; points out that the limited number of observers deeply undermines the quality of the task to be performed and the overall credibility of the mission;

11.Expresses its deep concern at the diplomatic efforts by the Russian Federation to curtail the activities of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODHIR) by submitting proposals to the OSCE to cut the size of election observation missions and by prohibiting the publication of their reports immediately after an election; highlights the irreplaceable key role played by this organisation in the transition from totalitarian regimes to democratic systems; stresses that a free and fair electoral process is at the core of a genuine and fully-fledged functioning democracy and that OSCE observation missions can make a decisive contribution in this direction;

12.Emphasises, once again, that a strong and independent civil society is a fundamental and irreplaceable element of a real and mature democracy; is deeply concerned, in this regard, at the deteriorating situation of human rights defenders and the difficulties faced by human rights NGOs in becoming registered and in carrying out their activities; is extremely concerned by the newly amended legislation on extremism, which could have an effect on the free flow of information and could lead the Russian authorities to further restrict the right to free expression of independent journalists and political opponents;

13.Welcomes the adoption of the agreement on visa facilitation that is to be considered as a first step towards achieving visa-free travel between the EU and Russia; deplores, in this regard, the obstacles and the reluctance of the Russian authorities to implement such agreement for political reasons;

14.Takes note of the stepping-up of the energy dialogue but expresses its concern over the fact that the Russian state is retaking control of all resources, including energy, while failing to invest politically in the democratisation of industrial relations and in improved transparency and accountability of industrial decision-making, in the absence of clear policy goals with regard to sustainable development and resource efficiency; calls on Russia to swiftly incorporate international best practice on transparency and public accountability into national legislation;

15.Strongly encourages both partners to agree on a joint approach to limiting climate change to a maximum temperature increase of 2°C compared to pre-industrialised levels through fair contributions to efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by developed and developing countries, according to their differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities;

16.Recognises that global emissions need to be reduced by at least 50% by 2050 compared to 1990 levels; insists, in this respect, on the specific responsibility of developed countries to take the lead in reducing emissions and considers that reductions by industrialised countries in the order of 30% by 2020 are necessary; calls on Russia to play an active role in future international negotiations and to facilitate a swift agreement by 2008, or by 2009 at the latest, to ensure continuity of the global carbon market;

17.Expresses its concerns regarding the security of the nuclear sector in the Russian Federation and its plans to export nuclear technology and material to other countries and the associated nuclear security and proliferation threats that this produces; calls on the Russian Federation to stop shipments of nuclear material as well as nuclear reprocessing, since these activities constitute potential proliferation risks;

18.Calls on the Russian Federation to invest heavily in energy efficiency measures, given the urgent need to address climate change, the social benefits that such investment will bring and the pressure on energy supplies; recalls in this respect that the flexibility mechanism provided for in the Kyoto Protocol could attract investments to modernise the Russian energy and energy end-uses sector;

19.Calls on the Russian Federation to support the development of its renewable energy industry to make use of the huge environmentally sustainable resources that are available; calls on the Russian Federation to guarantee state-of-the-art environmental standards for all the oil and gas projects which are in progress or planned on its territory;

20.Expresses its deep concerns about the poor conditions of detention in Russia, especially in remand centres and police detention, which are made even worse by very poor medical supplies and bad sanitary standards;

21.Condemns in particular the continuing violations of human rights in Chechnya, where extra-judicial killings, illegal places of compulsory detention, enforced disappearances and torture are still ongoing; underlines in this regard that in October 2006 the Russian Government rejected the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on Torture, who planned to visit prisons in the North Caucasus without prior notice;

22.Emphasises that the Russian Federation has signed and ratified the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment of December 1984 and the European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment of 1987, and that, as a member of the Council of Europe, Russia is also obliged to respect Article 6 of the European Convention on Human Rights, which guarantees the right to a fair trial;

23.Calls on the Russian authorities to combat arbitrariness, to respect the principle of the rule of law and not to use the judiciary as a political tool; underlines, in this regard, the case of the former Yukos owners Mikhail Khodorkovsky and Platon Lebedev, who were convicted of fraud and tax evasion but were considered political prisoners by the European Parliament, as underlined in an open letter to President Putin in July 2006;

24.Remains totally unconvinced that Europe would need, in the foreseeable future, a system of missiles to protect its territory against hostile long-range ballistic missiles with WMD warheads launched by rogue nations or non-state actors; takes note of the Russian concerns in this regard but calls on Moscow not to halt compliance with the Treaty on Conventional Arms in Europe; finds it unacceptable for the indivisibility of European security that the US is negotiating the deployment of such a system unilaterally with two EU Member States; is convinced that to counter new arms races, long-term terrorist threats and other threats endangering European and global security there must be huge investments in conflict-prevention policies and disarmament initiatives, and that a direct dialogue must urgently be opened with Moscow in order to find a common and mutually beneficial agreement;

25. Expresses its deepest concern at the announcement by President Putin that Russia plans to build a new generation of nuclear weapons; calls on the Council to raise this issue at the next meetings and make every effort to stop a new nuclear arms race;

26.Calls on Russia not to further delay beyond 10 December the decision on the final status of Kosovo; draws attention to the repercussions that such a delay could have on the stability of the region and urges the Russian authorities to act in a constructive way;

27.Takes the view that a deeper European involvement in the frozen conflicts is indispensable in order to move the peace processes forward; expresses its deep concern at the recent incidents between Russian and Georgian forces in Abkhazia; calls on the Council and the Commission to raise this issue firmly with the Russian authorities and urges the Russian authorities not to oppose an EU presence in civilian and military peace-keeping operations;

28.Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Member States and the Government and Parliament of the Russian Federation.

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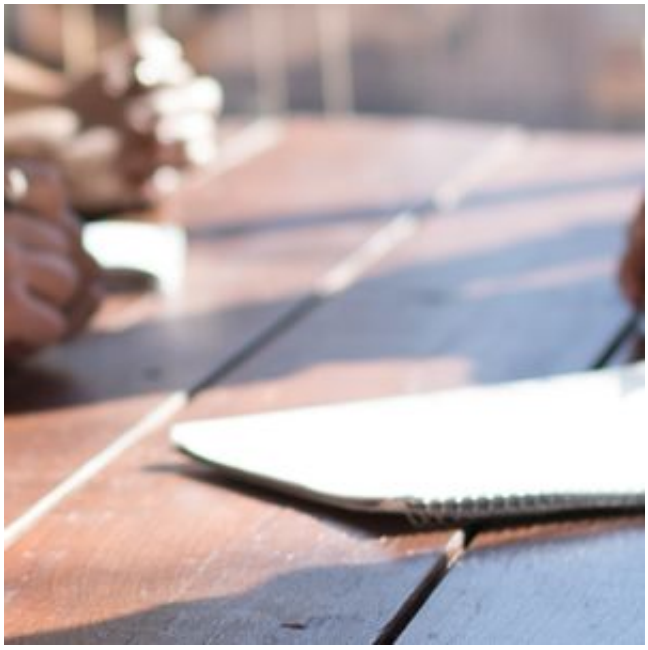

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Heads of national delegations in the GREENS/EFA Group

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