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EU-Russia Summit in Samara on 18 May 2007

Greens/EFA motion for a resolution

*Tabled by Bart Staes, Milan Horá?ek, 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 25 October 2006(1), 13 December 2006(2) and 26 April 2007(3),

☐ having regard to the EU-Russia Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, which is due to expire in 2007

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

A. whereas the forthcoming EU-Russia summit takes place at a time when, according to Commissioner Mandelson, 'the EU-Russia relationship contains a level of misunderstanding or even mistrust we have not seen since the end of the cold war',

B. whereas no agreement has yet been reached on how to overcome the deadlock on the ban of 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 speak with one voice and adopt a common position; whereas, on the other hand, Member States should act responsibly and even-handedly, refraining from using their power of veto,

D. whereas the US decision to station 10 interceptor missiles in Poland with radar operations in the Czech Republic has further strained relations between the two sides, with Russia threatening to stop implementing the 1990 Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe until all NATO members have ratified it,

E. whereas the recent violent clampdown by the police on peaceful demonstrations in Moscow and Saint Petersburg have further highlighted the increasing erosion of human rights and democratic liberties in Russia and the growing self-censorship and control of the media by the government,

F. whereas the investigations concerning the series of killings of journalists 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 has undertaken to respect freedom of speech and of assembly; whereas observance of these principles is of particular importance in view of the forthcoming general and presidential elections in Russia; 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 dependency 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 no progress has been made as regards the solution to the 'frozen conflicts' in common neighbouring countries; whereas peace and stability are in the interest of both Russia and the EU,

1. Pays tribute to the memory of former President Boris Yeltsin, who played a crucial role as regards the end of the Soviet Communist regime and the transition to a more open and democratic society; expresses its sincere condolences to the Russian people;

2. 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 so as to engage 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;

3. Points out, 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; reiterates its call for the stepping-up of the EU-Russia Human Rights consultation so as to make it more effective, result-oriented and open to NGOs and with the full involvement of the European Parliament at all levels;

4. Regrets the timid reaction of concern by the EU Presidency and the Commission at the Moscow and Saint Petersburg events; deplores the reticent attitude of those European Heads of State, who, while visiting Moscow, failed to address human rights issues with their Russian counterpart;

5. Rejects President Putin's statement according to which democratic slogans are used to gain unilateral advantages and personal benefits and to secure one's own interests; highlights, once again, that a strong and independent civil society is a fundamental and irreplaceable element of a real and mature democracy;

6. Welcomes the opening of an inquiry by the Russian competent authorities on action taken by law enforcement forces that violently repressed demonstrators on 14 and 15 April 2007 in Moscow and Saint Petersburg;

7. Emphasises that Russia's WTO membership will spur an economic growth model in Russia based mainly on the exploitation of fossil fuels as well as enhanced trade in fossil fuels with the EU; is concerned that this will consolidate the EU's reliance on fossil fuels and thus might have a negative impact as regards reaching EU climate targets, if the opening of Russian gas markets is not balanced by cooperation schemes to boost renewable energy production;

8. Acknowledges that significant investments are undertaken in the maintenance of downstream distribution infrastructure and pipelines for fossil fuel supply; emphasises that a lack of investment in the development of renewable energy sources will enhance economic reliance on fossil energy supply at a time

in which diversification into new and renewable energy technologies offers more prospects for sustainable economic growth;

9. Takes note of the bill recently introduced in the Russian Federation which allows the government to reject foreign bids for majority stakes in Russian companies in 39 strategic industries; calls on the partners to come to a common understanding about the definition of strategic industries, especially in the energy and other resource-intensive sectors, in which sovereignty principles might be upheld in order to implement social and environmental policy goals; underlines that without democracy, transparency and accountability in industrial relations, sovereignty claims cannot be justified;

10. Expresses its concern over the fact that the Russian state is re-taking 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;

11. Is concerned about the introduction of so-called Special Economic Zones in Russia, which offer special incentives for investment; calls for strict observance and independent monitoring of human rights, and social and environmental standards in these Special Economic Zones;

12. Strongly encourages both partners to agree on a joint approach to limit 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;

13. Insists, in this respect, on the specific responsibility of developed countries to take the lead in reducing emissions; 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;

14. 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 safety 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;

15. Calls on the Russian Federation to invest heavily in energy efficiency measures, given the urgency of the climate change issue, 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;

16. Calls upon 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;

17. Expresses its deep concerns about the bad 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; refers, in this regard, to the huge number of complaints that victims have addressed to the human rights Ombudsman, Vladimir Lukin; condemns each case of torture and ill-treatment by officials in prisons;

18. 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;

19. 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 assures the right to a fair trial;

20. 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;

21. 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 be urgently opened with Moscow in order to find a common and mutually beneficial agreement;

22. Calls on Russia not to delay further the decision on the final status of Kosovo based on the Ahtisaari Plan of supervised independence; draws attention to the repercussions that such delay could have on the stability of the region and urges the Moscow authorities to act in a constructive way;

23. Welcomes the EU draft plan for the frozen conflicts in the South Caucasus, presented informally by the EU Special Envoy for the region; takes the view that deeper European involvement is indispensable in order to bring peace processes forward; calls on the Council to speed up adoption of this plan and to present it to and discuss it with the Russian authorities;

24. Welcomes the signing of the border agreement between Russia and Latvia, which paves the way for better cooperation in the Baltic region between the EU and the Russian Federation; regrets, on the other hand, the clashes which took place in Tallinn over the removal of a Soviet war memorial; points out that relations with Russia should be forward-looking, avoiding unilateral acts which contribute to straining the present problems;

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

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