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Preparation of the eleventh EU-Russia Summit in Khanty-Mansiysk on 26-27 June 2008

Greens/EFA motion for a resolution

Tabled by ***Daniel Cohn-Bendit, Bart Staes, Satu Hassi, 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[1], 10 May 2007[2] and 13 March 2008[3],

 having regard to its resolution of 14 November 2007[4] on the EU-Russia summit,

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

 having regard to the EU-Russia consultation on human rights,

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

A. whereas on 7 May Dmitry Medvedev was formally sworn in as President of the Russian Federation; whereas within hours of taking office the new President appointed as Prime Minister former President Vladimir Putin; whereas, the next day, Putin was overwhelmingly confirmed by the Duma as Prime Minister,

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

C. whereas after considerable progress as regards the Russian embargo against imports of meat and other agricultural products from Poland and assurances as regards the closure of the Druzhba pipeline, regarded by Lithuania as a political retaliatory measure, an agreement was eventually reached between the Member States on the finalisation of a new negotiating mandate for a new agreement replacing the present Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA), which expired at the end of last year,

D. whereas it is of the utmost importance for the EU to speak with one voice, show strong internal solidarity and adopt a common position and for its Member States to refrain from accepting Russia's

offers to step up bilateral relations with the most willing among their number; whereas, on the other hand, Member States should act responsibly and even-handedly, refraining from using their veto power on comprehensive and complex negotiations,

E. whereas at the recent NATO summit in Bucharest new concessions were presented to Russia in order to gain support for the anti-ballistic missile shield which the US intends to deploy in Poland and the Czech Republic; whereas the EU should have a say in these talks and make every effort to reach a common position on this matter that affects its overall security, could jeopardise its foreign policy and could trigger a new arms race in Europe,

F. whereas the ESDP Rule of Law mission in Kosovo is still without a clear legal basis due also to Russia's opposition to the foreseen transition and gradual handover from UNMIK to EULEX; whereas this unclear position is adding uncertainty to an already unstable and tense situation that could spill over to neighbouring countries,

G. whereas the last general and presidential elections failed to comply with international standards; whereas no substantial efforts were made to reverse the process of erosion of human rights and democratic liberties that has taken place in the Russian Federation in recent years and the growing self-censorship and control of the media by the government,

H. whereas the investigations concerning the series of killings of journalists with regard, in particular, to 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,

I. 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,

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

K. whereas this lack of coherence is widely reflected in the timid criticism by the Council, the Commission and the Member States of human rights violations in Russia and the situation in the Caucasus with regard, in particular, to Chechnya, which are rarely or very weakly raised during the bilateral meetings,

L. whereas some Member States have joined the South Stream gas pipeline project that is being led by Gazprom and ENI; whereas this project is putting at risk the Nabucco pipeline project, which is considered strategic by the EU,

M. whereas peace and stability in the common neighbouring countries are in the interest of both Russia and the EU; whereas after the decision by the Russian authorities to establish legal links with the breakaway republics of Abkhazia and South Ossetia the situation in these Georgian regions is further deteriorating, calling into question the role of the Russian forces as neutral peace-keepers and undermining the territorial integrity of Georgia,

1. Welcomes the words of the new President, Mr Medvedev, during his inauguration speech on the importance of civil rights and the fact that in previous speeches he has publicly championed the rule of law and the importance of human rights; expects that these words will be followed up by deeds and that Russia will undertake the necessary reforms that will pave the way for a fully-fledged democratic system;

2. Reiterates its view, in this regard, that at present the partnership with the Russian Federation can only be of a pragmatic nature; believes, nevertheless, that after the agreement reached between the Member States 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;

3. Takes the view that the road map for the implementation of the four Common Spaces should be regarded as the starting point for the negotiation of the new agreement;

4. Stresses once more 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 respect and support for such values;

5. Reiterates its call for the stepping-up of the EU-Russia Human Rights Consultation so as to make it more effective and result-oriented with the participation of Russian ministries other than the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and with the full involvement of the European Parliament at all levels; takes the view, in this regard, that the briefings organised by the Commission with civil-society actors prior to the official consultation are an important tool that should be duly reinforced and taken into account by the Russian authorities with a view to transforming them into a fully fledged legal seminar involving academics, representatives of civil society and officials from both sides;

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

7. Calls on the Russian authorities to comply with all the rulings of the European Court of Human Rights and to ratify the protocol on the reform of this body without delay; urges the Russian Federation also to ratify Additional Protocol 14 to the European Convention on Human Rights;

8. Stresses 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 difficulties faced by the NGOs active in the promotion of human rights and in environmental protection and ecological issues with regard to their registration and in carrying out their activities; is extremely concerned about 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;

9. 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 (ODIHR) by submitting proposals to the OSCE to cut the size of election observation missions and prohibit 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 the core of a genuine and fully-fledged functioning democracy and that OSCE observation missions can make a decisive contribution in this direction;

10. Points out that the agreement on visa facilitation must be considered a first step towards establishing a visa-free regime between the EU and Russia; calls, in this regard, for the regularisation of the status of EU citizens living in Russia and, in particular, for the lifting of bureaucratic barriers that prevent EU citizens from obtaining long-term visas;

11. Takes note of the stepping-up of the energy dialogue but expresses its concern over the fact that the Russian State is resuming 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 as well as the principles of the Energy Charter;

12. Regrets the lack of any consultation between Member States before they sign bilateral agreements with Moscow which have an impact on the EU's overall policies; deplores the use of energy by Russia as a political instrument and the uncoordinated signing of bilateral energy agreements by Member States, which undermine the interests and call into question the strategic projects of the EU as a whole and of other Member States; points out, in this regard, that the EU's heavy energy dependence on the Russian Federation deeply undermines the coherence, assertiveness and sustainability of its common foreign policy;

13.Strongly encourages both partners to agree on a joint approach in order to limit *climate changeto 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*;

14.*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 2009 at the latest, to ensure continuity of the global carbon market;

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

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.Condemns in particular the continuing violations of human rights in Chechnya, where extra-judicial killings, illegal places of 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;

18.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;

19.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;

20.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; 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 direct dialogue must be stepped up with Moscow in order to arrive at a common and mutually beneficial agreement;

21.Calls on Russia to adopt a more constructive stance on Kosovo and not to oppose the deployment of the EULEX mission as well as to fully support the OSCE and confirm its mandate in order to allow for the full implementation of all the guarantees provided for in the Kosovo Constitution and the commitments by the Kosovo authorities as regards the institutional decentralisation and protection of the non-majority communities and of the cultural and architectural heritage;

22.Deplores the decision of the Moscow authorities to establish official ties with the de facto authorities of the Georgian breakaway republics and the unilateral decision to increase the number of Russian peace-keeping troops in Abkhazia, aggravating the already tense situation; takes the view that the present peace-keeping format must be revised since the Russian troops can no longer be seen as neutral, and calls for a deeper European involvement in the frozen conflicts in order to bring the peace processes forward; calls on the Council and the Commission to make every effort to defuse tension and firmly raise this issue with the Russian counterpart and urges the Russian authorities not to oppose an EU presence in civilian and military peace-keeping operations;

23. Expresses its deep concern at the plight of the indigenous communities (Khanty, Mansi and Nenets) living in the region where the summit is to be held and calls on the Moscow authorities to adopt the necessary measures in order to protect their rights;

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

[1] P6_TA(2007)0169.

[1]P6_TA(2007)0178.

[1]P6_TA(2008)0105.

[1]P6_TA(2007)0528.

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Publication



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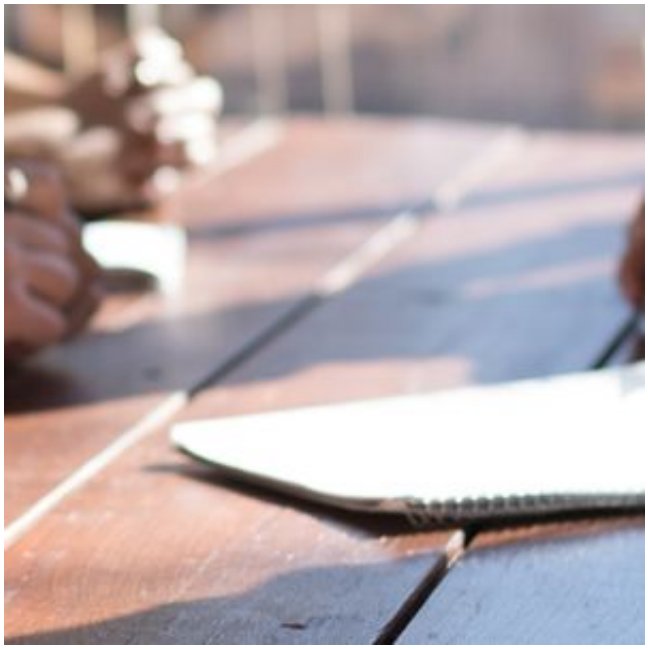

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