

EU-Russia

EU must stand for human rights and democracy at Russia summit

The European Parliament today adopted a resolution ahead of next week's EU-Russia summit. Finnish Green MEP **Heidi Hautala**, chair of the EP's human rights subcommittee, commented:

"The European Union must not stand back and allow its cooperation with Russia to be based on pure pragmatism. Instead, the EU must firmly insist that the independence of the Russian judiciary is respected and call for the strengthening of democracy, freedom of speech and human rights."

"There must be an open and far-reaching dialogue on human rights between Russia and the EU. The vulnerable situation of human rights defenders must remain at the centre of EU-Russia discussions until the problem is solved. The dire current situation, notably in the North Caucasus, gives cause for deep concern in this regard."

"Russia must sign up to ambitious emissions reductions in Copenhagen if it is to meet its responsibilities as a major player at the climate summit. It should also ratify the Espoo Convention on environmental impact assessment."

German Green MEP **Werner Schulz**, Vice-Chair of the EU-Russia Parliamentary Cooperation committee, added:

"In the wake of massive electoral fraud during Russian local elections on 11 October, we welcome Russian President Medvedev's recent statement that Russia will now renew its commitment to democratic principles. The EU must take him at his word and offer future support in the form of election observers."

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