



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2014 - 2019

Plenary sitting

13.1.2015

B8-0048/2015

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

with request for inclusion in the agenda for a debate on cases of breaches of human rights, democracy and the rule of law

pursuant to Rule 135 of the Rules of Procedure

on Russia, in particular the case of Alexey Navalny
(2015/2503(RSP))

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on behalf of the ALDE Group

European Parliament resolution on Russia, in particular the case of Alexey Navalny (2015/2503(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous recommendations and resolutions on Russia, in particular its recommendations to the Council of 23 October 2012⁽¹⁾ and of 2 April 2014⁽²⁾ on establishing common visa restrictions for Russian officials involved in the Sergei Magnitsky case, and its resolutions of 13 June 2013 on the rule of law in Russia⁽³⁾, of 13 March 2014 on ‘Russia: sentencing of demonstrators involved in the Bolotnaya Square events’⁽⁴⁾, and of 23 October 2014 on the closing-down of the NGO "Memorial" (winner of the 2009 Sakharov Prize) in Russia,
 - having regard to national and international human rights obligations to which Russia committed itself by becoming full Member of the Council of Europe, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the UN,
 - having regard to Rule 135 of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the situation of human rights and of rule of law has seriously deteriorated in Russia in recent years, with systematic efforts of state authorities to silence free speech, obstruct opposition activities, react with repressions to any activities aimed at exposing corruption behaviour of political and economic elite and stifle activities of Russian civil society; whereas the Russian judicial system has become a power instrument to this end, providing politically motivated arrest, trials and imprisonments with the notion of legality, and covering-up impunity of others;
- B. whereas respect of principles of democracy, human rights and rule of law are the key commitments related to Russia's membership in the Council of Europe, the OSCE and the UN, and are crucial factors of a thriving, prosperous and pluralistic society; whereas corruption heavily burdens economic development and impoverishes the Russian population;
- C. whereas the EU has repeatedly offered assistance and expertise, through the Partnership for Modernisation, to strengthen the rule of law, to meet its international obligations and develop its full economic potential;
- D. whereas Alexey Navalny uncovered, as lawyer, blogger and anti-corruption activist, numerous corruption affairs involving corporations and Russian political elite; whereas based on unsubstantiated charges, in February 2014 he was put under house arrest and, in a process that appeared to be politically motivated, on 30 December 2014 sentenced by the Zamoskvoretsky Court to 3.5 years under suspension; whereas Alexey's brother Oleg Navalny was sentenced in the same process to 3.5 years in prison; whereas this is only the

latest in a long line of politically-motivated cases under President Putin, including the 2003 arrest and imprisonment of Mikhail Khodorkovsky;

- E. whereas at the end of 2014 the Russian Ministry of Justice amended substantially the list of "foreign agents", adding several organizations engaging in support of protection of human rights, including the Andrei Sakharov Centre, the Kaliningrad-based Human Rights Centre, Anti-Discrimination Centre Memorial in Saint-Petersburg and many others, thus hampering notably their activities and protection of human rights in Russia;
1. Is alarmed by the significant and continuous deterioration of the actual situation in the area of human rights, rule of law and freedom of expression in Russia, as well as the persecution of civic society and its representative organisations by state authorities;
 2. Is concerned by the sentences against Alexej and Oleg Navalny, which were based on fabricated, unsubstantiated charges and appear thus as politically motivated; urges the Russian justice to demonstrate in the appeal procedure its independence from political interference and to undertake a substantial revision of the decision, ensuring that both defendants are given a fair trial, in full compliance with the rule of law and Russia's international legal obligations;
 3. Is particularly dismayed by the prison sentence against Oleg Navalny as an act of kin liability, aimed at intimidating and silencing political opponents by taking their relatives as a hostage;
 4. Condemns the registration of further human rights organisations on the list of so called foreign agents; reiterates its view that the law on "foreign agents" violates Russia's international human rights commitments under Council of Europe and the OSCE, and that it serves to control and threaten any organised activity related to public life; points out that the status of a foreign agent significantly complicates protection of human rights in Russia, making it nearly impossible; reiterates its call to repeal this law; furthermore urges the VP/HR to be more vocal of its criticism of Russian laws, like the law on 'foreign agents' that was adopted in July 2012, which systematically undermine freedoms and give authorities greater unchecked powers;
 5. Calls on the Russian authorities to put an end to the harassment of journalists and political and civil society activists, to fully respect international human rights obligations, guarantee media freedom and to enable the Russian people to exercise basic freedoms and pursue legitimate political and civil society activities;
 6. Asks the VP/HR to come up, as a matter of urgency, with a comprehensive strategy towards Russia, aimed at maintaining of territorial integrity and sovereignty of European states, and supporting, at the same time, the strengthening of democratic principles, respect for human rights and the rule of law in Russia;
 7. Stresses that given the number of unresolved politically motivated murders and the level of human rights violations, an important component of this strategy must be restrictive measures targeted at persons responsible for extrajudicial killings, torture, or other gross violations of human rights, including the death of Sergei Magnitsky; points in this regard

to its recommendation of April 2014 concerning common visa restrictions for Russian officials involved in the Sergei Magnitsky case and urges the VP/HR and the Commission to bring the relevant initiative into the Council without delay;

8. Is of the view that another important element of this strategy must be reaching out to Russian people, developing cultural and educational exchanges, scientific cooperation, as well as supporting civil society organisations; asks the Commission to focus available financial assistance on these areas;
9. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, to the Council and the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the Council of Europe, the OSCE, and the President, Government and Parliament of the Russian Federation.