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*Plenary sitting*

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**B8-0099/2018**

6.2.2018

## **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, the case of Oyub Titiev and the Human Rights Centre Memorial (2018/2560(RSP))

**Cristian Dan Preda, Tunne Kelam, Tomáš Zdechovský, Jeroen Lenaers, Bogdan Brunon Wenta, Jaromír Štětina, Michaela Šojdrová, Romana Tomc, Laima Liucija Andrikienė, Roberta Metsola, Eduard Kukan, Ivan Štefanec, Milan Zver, Patricija Šulin, Bogdan Andrzej Zdrojewski, Krzysztof Hetman, Agnieszka Kozłowska-Rajewicz, Dubravka Šuica, Francis Zammit Dimech, László Tóké, David McAllister, Adam Szejnfeld, Mairead McGuinness, Csaba Sógor, Sandra Kalniete, Deirdre Clune, Ivana Maletić, Eva Maydell, Seán Kelly, Anna Maria Corazza Bildt, Pavel Svoboda, José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra, Željana Zovko, Inese Vaidere, Ramón Luis Valcárcel Siso, Francisco José Millán Mon**

on behalf of the PPE Group

**European Parliament resolution on Russia, the case of Oyub Titiev and the Human Rights Centre Memorial (2018/2560(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to its previous reports and resolutions on Russia, in particular its resolutions of 13 June 2013 on the rule of law in Russia, of 13 March 2014 on Russia: sentencing of demonstrators involved in the Bolotnaya Square events, and of 23 October 2014 on the closing-down of the NGO ‘Memorial’ (winner of the 2009 Sakharov Prize) in Russia,
  - having regards to the statement of the Chairs of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and Subcommittee on Human Rights of the European Parliament of 12 January 2018 calling for the immediate release of human rights defender Oyub Titiev,
  - having regard to article 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and article 7 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, both of which provide that no one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment and to which Russian Federation is a party,
  - having regard to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms,
  - having regard to the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, adopted by the UN General Assembly on 9 December 1998,
  - having regard to the seventh periodic report of the Russian Federation considered by the United Nations Human Rights Committee at its 3136th and 3137th meetings, held on 16 and 17 March 2015,
  - having regard to its previous reports and resolutions on Russia, in particular its resolution of 12 March 2015 on the murder of the Russian opposition leader Boris Nemtsov and the state of democracy in Russia, its resolution of 24 November 2016 on Case of Ildar Dadin, prisoner of conscience in Russia and its resolution of 6 of April 2017 on Russia, the arrest of Alexei Navalny and other protestors,
  - having regard to Rule 135 of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the Russian Federation, as a full member of the Council of Europe, and a signatory to the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, has committed itself to the principles of democracy, the rule of law and respect or fundamental freedoms and human rights;
- B. whereas the Russian Federation has ratified 11 out of the 18 international human rights

treaties;

- C. whereas the criminal law of the Russian Federation has been amended and the new article 212.1 has been introduced, according to which a person can be charged in case of violation of the law on public assemblies, notwithstanding the fact that this amendment restricts the freedom of speech and assembly;
  - C. whereas Russian authorities show a tendency towards disrespecting the right of free gathering and detained alone more than 1000 demonstrating citizens in the City of Moscow and numerous more in several further cities of the Russian Federation after peaceful demonstrations held on March 26, 2017;
  - D. whereas the number of political prisoners in the country had significantly increased in the recent years, counting 102 persons in 2016 according to Memorial Human Rights Centre;
  - E. whereas the European Parliament has awarded the 2009 **Sakharov Prize** for Freedom of thought to the **Memorial** human right group;
1. Calls for immediate release of the Director of the Memorial Human Rights Centre in the Chechen Republic, Mr Oyub Titiev, who was detained on 9 January 2018 and then officially indicted and remanded on trumped - up charges of illegal acquisition and possession of narcotics (marijuana);
  2. Notes with concern the fact that the arrest comes shortly after Magomed Daudiv, the speaker of the Chechen parliament, called human rights activists “enemies” with “foreign bosses”, suggesting they should be “isolated from the healthy society” and openly made calls for their persecution;
  3. Is of the opinion that the arrest of Mr Titiev is part of a worrying trend of arrests, attacks, intimidations and discrediting of independent journalists and human rights defenders working in Chechnya; points out that other cases that form part of this worrying trend include the chair of the Assembly of the Peoples of the Caucasus, Ruslan Kutaev, and the journalist Zhalaudi Geriev, who were both sentenced on dubious grounds relating to drugs respectively in 2014 and 2016;
  4. Expresses its deep concern that no one has yet been brought to justice for the murder of Mr Oyub Titiev’s Memorial predecessor and human rights activist in Chechnya, Ms Natalia Estemirova, who was abducted from outside her home in Grozny in July 2009 and was found shot dead later the same day near the village of Gazi-Yurt in neighboring Ingushetia; recalls in this respect that yet another human rights lawyer and activist, Stanislav Markelov, known for his work on Chechnya abuses, was shot dead in Central Moscow in 2009;
  5. Is deeply concerned that the worrying trend of arrests, as well as attacks, intimidations and discrediting of independent journalists and human rights defenders who work in that region of the Russian Federation, is a breach of their right to free expression; condemns attacks on human rights defenders by Chechen authorities and urge Moscow to put an end to these attacks and to foster a normal working climate for human rights

defenders in Chechnya;

6. Expresses deep concern at the worsening condition of critical civil society in Russia, in particular those organisations which work on human rights and democratic freedoms and express criticism of state policies in this respect; underlines that the 2009 Sakharov Prize Winner Memorial **Human Rights Centre** stays one of the most authoritative voices on **human rights** in Russia today, as well as it has become the last remaining independent human rights organisation to continue to operate in the Republic of Chechnya;
7. Is in agreement with EU Statement on human rights violations concerning the Memorial Human Rights Centre in Russia which points out that yet another sign of the persecution and harassment suffered by human rights organisations in the North Caucasus region was the arson attack on 17 January against the offices of Memorial in the neighbouring Republic of Ingushetia; calls in this respect for immediate, independent and impartial investigation to find those responsible, so they face all the severity of the law;
8. Calls on the Chechen and Russian authorities to follow international commitments and to uphold the rule of law and universal human rights standards and to ensure the safety of all persons who might be at risk;
9. Calls on the High Representative and the European External Action Service (EEAS) to ensure that the cases of all persons prosecuted for political reasons are raised in EU-Russia human rights consultations when resumed, and that Russia's representatives in these consultations are formally requested to respond in each case;
10. 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, the Council, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the Council of Europe, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and the President, Government and Parliament of the Russian Federation, and the Chechen authorities.