



Plenary sitting

B8-0117/2019

12.2.2019

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 the situation in Chechnya and the case of Oyub Titiev
(2019/2562(RSP))

Charles Tannock, Ryszard Czarnecki, Anna Elżbieta Fotyga, Jana Žitňanská, Ruža Tomašić, Monica Macovei, Jadwiga Wiśniewska, Roberts Zīle

on behalf of the ECR Group

**European Parliament resolution on the situation in Chechnya and the case of Oyub Titiev
(2019/2562(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- of 8 February 2018 on Russia, the case of Oyub Titiev and Human Rights Centre Memorial, the 14 June 2018 resolution on Russia, notably the case of Ukrainian political prisoner Oleg Sentsov and of 23 October 2014 on the closing-down of the NGO ‘Memorial’ (winner of the 2009 Sakharov Prize) in Russia,
- 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 Rule 135 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - A. whereas according to Human Rights Watch, “the Russian government relentlessly reduced space for peaceful dissent, political opposition, and civic activism in Russia during 2018”; whereas Russia’s human rights situation is getting worst with every passing year; whereas report presented to the OSCE Permanent Council in December 2018 concluded that the authorities of the Chechen Republic of the Russian Federation “carried out extra-judicial executions, torture, and other abuses, and the Russian government “appears to support the perpetrators rather than the victims” in Chechnya;
 - B. whereas Chechen de-facto independence was crashed in the Second Chechen War (1999-2009) that launched Vladimir Putin’s political career, when in September 1999 a series of apartment bombings in several major cities shook Russia; whereas Putin, then prime minister, immediately blamed Chechnya and declared, war which brought him from obscurity into the presidency; whereas Putin oversaw a scorched earth campaign in Chechnya, razing the capital city Grozny to the ground; whereas in the Second Chechen War, over 60,000 people were killed; whereas total death toll in two wars is estimated at about 150,000 to 200,000 civilians;
 - C. whereas the Kadyrov clan defected to the Moscow side at the beginning of the Second Chechen War in 1999; whereas since then, Ramzan Kadyrov led his militia with support from Russia’s FSB state security service (including service ID cards) becoming the head of the Chechen Presidential Security Service, which later become known as the “Kadyrovtsy”; whereas in 2007 Putin installed Kadyrov as president of the Chechen Republic of the Russian Federation; whereas 80% of republics budget

comes from Russian federal subsidies;

- D. whereas according to Novaya Gazeta and HRC Memorial and OSCE Report 27 men were executed on 26 January 2017 during counter-terrorism operations conducted in response to the killing of 3 policemen on 17 and 18 December 2016 in several clashes; whereas more than 200 men were detained on suspicion of extremism;
- E. whereas on 9 January 2018, Oyub Titiev, head of the Chechnya office of the Human Rights Center “Memorial” was detained on the charges of possession of marijuana; whereas Titiev and other Memorial staff on Chechnya have been working on the case of 27 men who were extra-judicially executed on 26 January 2017 following their detention in December 2016 during operations by special forces;
- F. whereas on January 17, 2018, Memorial office in Russian republic of Ingushetia was set on fire; whereas on January 22, 2018 unknown arsonists set on fire the car belonging to Memorial’s local office in Russian republic of Dagestan;
- G. whereas in July 2009, Mr. Titev’s Memorial predecessor and human rights activist in Russian republic of Chechnya, Ms Natalia Estemirova was abducted from outside her home in Grozny and was found shot dead later the same day near in the neighbouring Ingushetia; whereas the European Parliament has awarded the 2009 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of thoughts to the Memorial Human Rights Center;
- H. whereas the Putin regime attacked Memorial, both as the historical and educational society and as the Human Rights Center, founded in years 1989-1991 by Soviet/Russian dissidents including Andrei Sakharov, after whom the European Parliament named in December 1988 The Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought;
- I. whereas Yuri Dmitriev, Memorial historian who was part of the team that found a mass grave at Sandarmokh of more than 9,000 people, many of them members of Ukrainian intelligentsia, killed by Stalin in 1937-38 Great Terror, revealed in 2017 a list of more than 40,000 Stalin-era secret policemen, a move that raised an outcry among some of their descendants and Russian security services; whereas Dmitriev was arrested in July 2017 and was tried on charges brought by state prosecutors of involving his 11-year-old daughter in child pornography;
- J. whereas after pleas of his family his case was dropped from the European Parliament urgency resolution and later on in April 2018 Titiev was acquitted; whereas on 14 June 2018 his acquittal was overturned by Russian Karelia’s High Court and he was arrested and accused of planning to flee to Poland, a country that awarded him the Cross of Merit in 2015; whereas he was also accused of raping his daughter and now faces a sentence of 20 years of prison, which in his case is synonymous with life; whereas on 2 October 2018 a second Karelian historian, Sergei Koltyrin has been arrested and is facing charges almost identical to those now brought against Yuri Dmitriev;
- K. whereas on 27.06.2018 EEAS issued a statement on the cases of Russian human rights defenders Oyub Titiev and Yuri Dmitriev; whereas it states that “Russia’s international commitments include an obligation to protect human rights defenders”; whereas “the European Union expects the Russian authorities to abide to these

commitments so that the cases against Mr Titiev and Mr Dmitriev can be dropped, and Mr. Titiev immediately released”;

- L. whereas since December 2016 in Chechnya (Russian Federation) there were three waves or purges of persons suspected of homo- and transsexual orientation (LGBTI): December 2016-February 2017, March 2017-May 2017, and the recent one since November 2018, when Russian authorities refused to acknowledge the testimony of Maxim Lapunov, the only victim that was willing to testify and forced him to flee; whereas since December 2018 “around 40 people have been arrested and at least two people have died under torture”;
1. Calls for immediate release of the Director of the Human Rights Center in the Chechen Republic, Oyub Titiev and for release and dropping of all charges against Yuri Dmitriev and Sergei Koltyrin; as well as others sentenced in fabricated cases of drug possession like journalist Zhalaudi Geriev and human rights defender Ruslan Kutaev from Caucasus Knot as well as Liya Milushkina and Artyom Milushkin arrested in Pskov;
 2. Condemns arrest of Lev Ponomarev, 77-years old veteran human rights campaigner and co-founder of Memorial in December 2018 and sentencing him to 25 days prison term;
 3. Calls on the authorities of the Russian Federation and especially the authorities and Head of the Chechen Republic of the Russian Federation to stop harassment and persecution, arbitrary or unlawful arrests or detentions, torture, enforced disappearances and extrajudicial executions, including against persons based on their sexual orientation, alleged drugs addicts and even teenagers;
 4. Condemns statements by Apti Alaudinov, the Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Interior of the Russian Republic of Chechnya- Chief of Police, who instructed the heads of police to deal with those who are against the current government by “imprisonment, placing objects (i.e. drugs), or killing” from 2013;
 5. Condemns Russia’s attempts to cover its Stalinist era crimes as well as arresting human rights defenders on trumped up charges in Russian Federation and its republics, including Chechnya, Ingushetia, Dagestan, Karelia and others;
 6. Condemns attacks on human rights defenders by Russian authorities and their Chechen helpers and urge Moscow to put an end to these attacks and allow Memorial and other human rights organizations to work in Chechnya and other parts of Russian Federation;
 7. Calls for the ICC to investigate crimes against humanity committed during Russian Wars against Chechnya as well as these committed by the Kadyrov regime installed in Chechnya by Russian President Putin after the Second Chechen War;
 8. Condemns Russian government preparations to pull out of the Council of Europe as indicated by Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, especially taking into account that it could deny Russian citizens the protection and access to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg to which they submitted 11,700 applications out of the

total 56,000;

9. Supports the request by Memorial to Russian authorities to move Titiev's case from Russian republic of Chechnya to other part of Russian Federation;
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 as well as the authorities of the Chechen Republic of the Russian Federation.