



MEPs hold a minute of silence for murdered human rights activist Natalia Estemirova

MEPs held a minute of silence for murdered human rights activist Natalia Estemirova at the start of Thursday's plenary session in Strasbourg. Vice-President Alejo Vidal-Quadras (EPP, ES) referred to a statement from new European Parliament President Jerzy Buzek, who expressed sympathy with the family and friends of Natalia Estemirova and called on the Russian authorities to start a fully fledged inquiry into her death.

The statement by Jerzy Buzek reads:

"With great sadness I have learned of the tragic death of Natalia Estemirova, who was abducted earlier today in Grozny. On behalf of the European Parliament I would like to express our sympathy and condolences to the family and friends of the deceased. Natalia Estemirova was a human rights activist and a leading researcher with Memorial on Chechnya. In 2005 she was awarded the Robert Schuman Medal by the EPP Group in the European Parliament.

We in the European Parliament have appreciated her work in the fields of human rights, promoting democratic accountability and the implementation of the rule of law. We strongly call on the authorities of the Russian Federation to start a fully fledged inquiry into her death and do their utmost to bring those responsible for this tragic death to face justice.

The European Parliament is in the forefront of promoting democracy, implementation of the rule of law and defender of human rights. It is therefore our obligation to support and show our solidarity with all those who struggle everywhere in the world for the same values. As was the case with Natalia Estemirova".

Contact :

Robert A. Golański

President's Press Service

E-mail: robert.golanski@europarl.europa.eu

PORT: +32 475 751 663

Richard FREEDMAN

E-mail: press-EN@europarl.europa.eu

BXL: (32-2) 28 41448

STR: (33-3) 881 73785

PORT: (+32) 498 98 32 39