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## **MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION**

to wind up the debate on statements by the Council and Commission

pursuant to Rule 103(2) of the Rules of Procedure

by Jan Marinus Wiersma, Reino Paasilinna, Richard Howitt and Csaba Sándor Tabajdi

on behalf of the PSE Group

on Chechnya after the elections and civil society in Russia

**B6-0029/2006**

**European Parliament resolution on Chechnya after the elections and civil society in Russia**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Russia, particularly that of 15 December 2005 on human rights in Russia and that of 26 May 2005 on EU-Russia relations,
  - having regard to the objective of the EU and Russia to implement the four common spaces agreed at the EU-Russia Summit in May 2005,
  - having regard to the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the Russian Federation, of the other part, which entered into force on 1 December 1997,
  - having regard to the many credible reports by Russian and international NGOs on the continuing grave violations of human rights in Chechnya and the judgements of the European Court of Human Rights in cases relating to Chechnya,
  - having regard to the European Convention on Human Rights and its five Protocols,
  - having regard to Rule 103(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas parliamentary elections took place in the Russian republic of Chechnya on 27 November 2005,
- B. whereas no respected international election observers monitored the election and a fact-finding mission from the Council of Europe said that the region was permeated by a 'climate of fear', which made it impossible to conduct a democratic vote,
- C. whereas the Presidency of the EU said in the statement of 29 November 2005 that these elections were an important step towards broader representation of a range of views in Chechen society, and the Presidency also stated that the elections appeared to have passed without serious incident,
- D. whereas Russian and international human rights organisations severely criticised this optimistic assessment and accused the EU of whitewashing reality and calling into question the EU's commitment to human rights,
- E. whereas the EU-Russia Summit in London in October 2005 welcomed the Commission's decision to provide EUR 20 million for assistance to socioeconomic recovery in the North Caucasus as a further sign of EU willingness to cooperate in the region,
- F. whereas both the State Duma and the Federation Council recently approved the slightly revised bill to tighten state control over non-governmental organisations (NGOs) operating in Russia; whereas the bill is now awaiting President Vladimir Putin's signature,

- G. whereas the legislative measures focus on foreign funding for NGOs and the procedure for setting up representative offices of foreign organisations; whereas under the bill foreign NGOs will have to notify the federal registration service of their existence within six months and the registration service will then rule on their legality,
- H. whereas in a letter sent to the Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov on 28 December 2005 NGOs, including Memorial, the Moscow Helsinki Group and For Civil Rights, stressed that a whole range of aspects of the bill continue to contradict international law, the Russian Constitution, the Russian Civil Code and a series of Russian laws,
- I. whereas this year Russia is assuming the presidency of the G8 for the first time in its history,
1. Fully endorses the assessment by the head of the delegation of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) to Chechnya, Andreas Gross, expressing doubt about the fairness of parliamentary elections in a situation where people are being killed and abducted in Chechnya;
  2. Regrets that the Republican Party, which wanted to start building bridges in the polarised and fragmented Chechen society, was prevented from participating in the elections;
  3. Is deeply concerned about the continuing failure to end lawlessness in Chechnya, including within the ranks of federal and local government forces; calls for an immediate end to impunity and violence on both sides and for a political solution and respect for the territorial integrity of Russia;
  4. Calls on the Council and the Member States to consistently raise the issue of Chechnya at their political meetings, in the human rights dialogue and at other meetings with the Russian Federation in order to ensure that this area does not escape international attention and concern;
  5. Calls on Russia to cooperate with UN rapporteurs, the Council of Europe and the OSCE to promote stability, transparency and the rule of law;
  6. Calls upon the Government of the Russian Federation, in line with its international commitments, to fully investigate all cases of abuse or intimidation of NGOs and individual human rights activists, in particular those monitoring the human rights situation in Chechnya; calls, in this regard, on the Council to pay particular attention to the protection of these people in compliance with the EU Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders adopted in June 2004 and to put the matter at the top of the agenda of the EU-Russia Consultation on Human Rights;
  7. Reiterates its condemnation of all terrorist acts; expresses its belief that terrorism has deep roots in the socioeconomic situation in the North Caucasus, as recognised by President Putin after the Beslan tragedy;
  8. Regrets that the bill strengthening government control over NGOs in Russia was passed easily in both houses of parliament and failed to take fully into account the recommendations made by the Council of Europe in its provisional opinion on the matter;

hopes that, before signing the bill into law, President Putin can still ensure that the law is fully in line with the Council of Europe recommendations;

9. Is particularly concerned about the unexplained criteria for refusals of registration and for shutting down non-profit and civil organisations under the bill;
10. Calls on the current Austrian and the next Finnish EU Presidency to raise the issues of respect for democracy and human rights at the next EU-Russia summits, to give the EU-Russia human rights dialogue a more prominent role and to further involve the European Parliament in this process;
11. Takes the view, in this respect, that the road maps for the creation of the four Common Spaces should be linked to real progress in the field of democracy and human rights;
12. Believes that Russia's Presidency of the G8 this year affords a good opportunity to address cooperation with the EU in numerous areas, particularly in the field of human rights;
13. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the Governments and Parliaments of the Member States and Russia.