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B6-0127/2008 }
B6-0128/2008 }
B6-0130/2008 } RC1

JOINT MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

pursuant to Rule 115(5) of the Rules of Procedure, by

- Bernd Posselt, Jana Hybášková, Christopher Beazley, Tunne Kelam and Thomas Mann, on behalf of the PPE-DE Group
- Marios Matsakis and Janusz Onyszkiewicz, on behalf of the ALDE Group
- Ryszard Czarnecki, Adam Bielan, Hanna Foltyn-Kubicka, Ewa Tomaszewska, Konrad Szymański, Wojciech Roszkowski, Mieczysław Edmund Janowski, Marcin Libicki, Ģirts Valdis Kristovskis and Roberts Zīle, on behalf of the UEN Group
- Bart Staes and Milan Horáček, on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group

replacing the motions by the following groups:

- PPE-DE (B6-0124/2008)
- ALDE (B6-0127/2008)
- Verts/ALE (B6-0128/2008)
- UEN (B6-0130/2008)

on Russia

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PE401.138v01-00}
PE401.141v01-00}
PE401.142v01-00}
PE401.144v01-00} RC1

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European Parliament resolution on Russia

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the objectives of consolidating democracy and political freedoms in the Russian Federation, as laid down in the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the Russian Federation, of the other part¹, which entered into force in 1997, expiring in 2007,
 - having regard to the EU-Russia human rights consultation,
 - having regard to the objective of the EU and Russia, set out in the joint statement issued following the St Petersburg Summit held on 31 May 2003, to set up a common economic space, a common space of freedom, security and justice, a common space of cooperation in the field of external security and a common space of research and education, including cultural aspects,
 - having regard to its previous resolutions on Russia, and in particular to its resolution of 25 October 2006 on EU-Russia relations following the murder of the Russian journalist Anna Politkovskaya, its resolution of 26 April 2007 on Russia, its resolution of 12 November 2007 on the EU-Russia Summit in Mafra and its resolution of 13 December 2006 on the EU-Russia Summit in Helsinki on 24 November 2006,
 - having regard to Rule 115(5) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas enhanced cooperation and good-neighbourly relations between the EU and Russia are of key importance to the stability, security and prosperity of the whole of Europe; whereas the conclusion of a Strategic Partnership Agreement between the EU and the Russian Federation remains of the utmost importance for a further development and intensification of the cooperation between the two partners, in particular with regard to matters of political, security, economic and energy cooperation, but also with regard to respect for the rule of law, democratic principles and procedures and for basic human rights,
- B. whereas alongside its membership of the United Nations the Russian Federation is a full member of the Council of Europe and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and has therefore committed itself to the principles of democracy and democratic elections as well as respect for freedom of speech and assembly laid down by those organisations; whereas those principles and values are also the basis for the strategic partnership between the EU and Russia,
- C. whereas the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, in its capacity as an international election standards watchdog (ODIHR), had to cancel its planned mission to monitor the elections in Russia because of the severe restrictions placed on its observers by the Russian Government;
- D. whereas the head of the observers from the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

¹ OJ L 327, 28.11.1997, p. 1.

declared that the equal access of candidates to the media has not improved, calling into question the fairness of the election;

- E. whereas Mikhail Kasyanov, the former Prime Minister and current leader of the People's Democratic Union, registered as a candidate on December 14 2007, but was later disqualified by the Central Election Commission, which stated that too many of the 2 million signatures of support were forged; whereas Kasyanov appealed against that decision to the Supreme Court, which rejected the appeal on 6 February 2008,
 - F. whereas according to reports by leading opposition forces, the Russian authorities, in the run-up to the parliamentary and presidential elections, put increased pressure on opposition groups and non-governmental organisations to refrain from any activities directed against the president and the government, preventing the media from reporting on any such activities,
 - G. whereas democracy has been weakened in Russia, in particular by the bringing of all major TV stations and most radio stations under government control, the spread of self-censorship among the print media, new restrictions on the right to organise public demonstrations and a worsening climate for NGOs,
 - H. whereas on 3 March 2008 'Other Russia', a coalition of opposition parties, organised a 'March of Dissent' to protest against the presidential elections in Russia the previous Sunday; whereas the city authorities refused to authorise the protest, saying that the pro-Kremlin 'Young Russia' group had already planned gatherings at every large meeting point in the capital; whereas 'Other Russia' decided to go ahead with the march and said it would appeal against the city's decision,
 - I. whereas several opposition protesters were arrested as riot police and militias wearing helmets and carrying riot shields crushed the rally in Turgenevskaya Square in central Moscow; whereas Nikita Belykh, the head of the Union of Right Forces, was among those detained; whereas the leader of the Yabloko party in St Petersburg, Maksim Reznik, was also arrested, on 3 March 2008;
- 1. Condemns the disproportionate use of force by police and riot police and militias against the demonstrators on 3 March 2008 in Moscow, and calls on the authorities to investigate the incidents and to bring those responsible to justice;
 - 2. Calls on the Russian authorities to release all opposition activists in detention, and to refrain from politically-instigated judicial proceedings aimed at the opposition;
 - 3. Deplores that, in particular, the run-up to the presidential election was marked by unfair treatment of opposition candidates; regrets the failure to use the recent election to strengthen democracy and the rule of law in Russia;
 - 4. Regrets that the Russian authorities regarded the intended monitoring mission of the OSCE/ODIR as an intrusion into internal affairs; voices its strong support for the important work of these missions and reminds Russia of its commitments and responsibilities as a member of the OSCE and of the Council of Europe, including the right of association and the right to peaceful demonstrations;

5. Welcomes the stated commitment by the newly elected President of Russia to guarantee the rule of law and democracy, and expresses the hope that Mr Medvedev will give priority to the deepening of relations with the European Union;
6. Calls on the newly elected Russian President to review the treatment of imprisoned public figures (among them Mihail Khodorkovsky and Platon Lebedev) whose imprisonment has been assessed by most observers as having been politically motivated; underlines that this would strengthen the credibility of the Russian authorities and enhance an even closer partnership between the Russian Federation and the European Union;
7. Calls on the new Russian President and Government to create together with the European Union the necessary conditions for a rapid start of the negotiations on a new Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the EU and Russia; stresses once more, in this respect, that the rule of law, democracy and human rights must be an important part of any future agreement with the Russian Federation;
8. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Governments and Parliaments of the Member States and of the Russian Federation, as well as the President of the Russian Federation, the Council of Europe and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe.