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Plenary sitting

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<Date>{05/04/2017}5.4.2017</Date>

<TitreType>JOINT MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION</TitreType>

<TitreRecueil>pursuant to Rules 135(5) and 123(4), of the Rules of Procedure</TitreRecueil>

replacing the motions by the following groups:

ECR (B8‑0245/2017)

S&D (B8‑0246/2017)

Verts/ALE (B8‑0249/2017)

ALDE (B8‑0250/2017)

PPE (B8‑0251/2017)

<Titre>on Russia, the arrest of Alexei Navalny and other protestors</Titre>

<DocRef>(2017/2646(RSP))</DocRef>

<RepeatBlock-By><Depute>Cristian Dan Preda, Tunne Kelam, Elmar Brok, Deirdre Clune, Pavel Svoboda, Laima Liucija Andrikienė, Brian Hayes, Jaromír Štětina, Stanislav Polčák, Ivan Štefanec, Therese Comodini Cachia, Jarosław Wałęsa, Tomáš Zdechovský, Sven Schulze, József Nagy, Dubravka Šuica, Ivana Maletić, Eduard Kukan, Claude Rolin, Romana Tomc, Giovanni La Via, Patricija Šulin, Csaba Sógor, Marijana Petir, Luděk Niedermayer, David McAllister, Željana Zovko, Bogdan Andrzej Zdrojewski, Adam Szejnfeld, Sandra Kalniete, Bogdan Brunon Wenta, Michaela Šojdrová, Milan Zver, Krzysztof Hetman, Michał Boni, José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra, Eva Maydell, Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska, Jiří Pospíšil, Anna Záborská, Anna Maria Corazza Bildt, Michael Gahler, Andrey Kovatchev</Depute>

<Commission>{PPE}on behalf of the PPE Group</Commission>

<Depute>Elena Valenciano, Victor Boştinaru, Soraya Post, Knut Fleckenstein</Depute>

<Commission>{S&D}on behalf of the S&D Group</Commission>

<Depute>Ruža Tomašić, Charles Tannock, Tomasz Piotr Poręba, Ryszard Antoni Legutko, Ryszard Czarnecki, Karol Karski, Jana Žitňanská, Roberts Zīle, Geoffrey Van Orden, Monica Macovei, Mark Demesmaeker</Depute>

<Commission>{ECR}on behalf of the ECR Group</Commission>

<Depute>Johannes Cornelis van Baalen, Beatriz Becerra Basterrechea, Petras Auštrevičius, Urmas Paet, Marian Harkin, Louis Michel, Ivan Jakovčić, Marielle de Sarnez, Maite Pagazaurtundúa Ruiz, Dita Charanzová, Jozo Radoš, Hilde Vautmans, Pavel Telička, Frédérique Ries, Marietje Schaake, Gérard Deprez, Carolina Punset, Nathalie Griesbeck, Petr Ježek, Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, Cecilia Wikström, Martina Dlabajová, Valentinas Mazuronis, Ramon Tremosa i Balcells, Ilhan Kyuchyuk, Jasenko Selimovic, Filiz Hyusmenova</Depute>

<Commission>{ALDE}on behalf of the ALDE Group</Commission>

<Depute>Rebecca Harms, Heidi Hautala, Tamás Meszerics, Indrek Tarand, Igor Šoltes, Bronis Ropė, Davor Škrlec, Ulrike Lunacek</Depute>

<Commission>{VERT}on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group</Commission></RepeatBlock-By>

European Parliament resolution on Russia, the arrest of Alexei Navalny and other protestors

(2017/2646(RSP))

*The European Parliament*,

– having regard to its previous reports and resolutions on Russia, in particular its resolutions of 23 October 2012[[1]](#footnote-1), of 13 June 2013 on the rule of law in Russia[[2]](#footnote-2), of 13 March 2014 on Russia: sentencing of demonstrators involved in the Bolotnaya Square events[[3]](#footnote-3), its recommendation of 2 April 2014, its resolutions of 23 October 2014 on the closing-down of the NGO ‘Memorial’ (winner of the 2009 Sakharov Prize) in Russia[[4]](#footnote-4), of 15 January 2015 on Russia, in particular the case of Alexei Navalny[[5]](#footnote-5), of 12 March 2015 on the murder of the Russian opposition leader Boris Nemtsov and the state of democracy in Russia[[6]](#footnote-6), and of 24 November 2016 on the case of Ildar Dadin, prisoner of conscience in Russia[[7]](#footnote-7),

– having regard to the Russian Constitution, in particular Article 29 which protects the freedom of speech and Article 31 which includes the right to peaceful assembly, and to the international human rights obligations to which Russia has committed itself as Member of the Council of Europe, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the UN,

– having regard to the ‘Partnership for Modernisation’ initiated in 2010 in Rostov-on-Don and to the commitment made by the Russian leadership to the rule of law as a fundamental basis for the modernisation of 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 the Russian Federation is a party,

– having regard to the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, adopted by the UN General Assembly on 9 December 1998,

– having regard to its resolution of 16 March 2017 on the Ukrainian prisoners in Russia and the situation in Crimea[[8]](#footnote-8),

– 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 Rules 135(5) and 123(4) of its Rules of Procedure,

A. whereas on 26 March 2017, between 33 000 and 93 000 people took part in anti-corruption rallies, marches and demonstrations in over 80 cities across Russia; whereas over 2 000 protesters were detained by police in cities across Russia, including about 1 000 in Moscow; whereas opposition politician Alexei Navalny was detained and fined USD 350 for organising banned protests and sentenced to 15 days in jail; whereas the protests are reckoned to be largest since the anti-Kremlin demonstrations in 2011 and 2012;

B. whereas the verdict of the Leninsky Court in Kirov (8 February 2017) against Russian opposition politician Alexei Navalny on charges of embezzlement attempts served to silence yet another independent political voice in the Russian Federation; whereas the European Court of Human Rights has ruled that Navalny was denied the right to a fair trial in his prosecution in 2013 on the same charges;

C. whereas the Russian Government has opened a criminal investigation against unidentified people who called on internet for a demonstration in Moscow on 2 April 2017 demanding the resignation of Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev, an end to Russian military operations in Ukraine and Syria, the release of Navalny and payment of compensation to activists detained during a Moscow protest on 26 March; whereas on 2 April at least 31 people were arrested during opposition protests in Moscow and thereafter detained for ‘breaches of public order’;

D. whereas the Russian Federation, as a full member of the Council of Europe, 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 for fundamental freedoms and human rights; whereas the European Union has repeatedly offered additional assistance and expertise to help Russia to modernise and abide by its constitutional and legal order, in line with Council of Europe standards;

E. whereas there are concerns about developments in the Russian Federation with regard to respect for, and the protection of, human rights and respect for commonly agreed democratic principles and the rule of law; whereas the Russian Federation has ratified 11 out of the 18 international human rights treaties;

F. 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 with violation of the law on public assemblies, notwithstanding the fact that this amendment restricts the freedom of speech and assembly;

G. whereas, according to the Memorial Human Rights Centre, the number of political prisoners in the country has significantly increased in recent years, totalling 102 persons in 2016;

1. Condemns the police operations in the Russian Federation attempting to prevent and disperse peaceful anticorruption demonstrations, and detaining hundreds of citizens, including Alexey Navalny, whose organisation initiated the demonstrations;

2. Calls on the Russian authorities for the immediate release of, and the dropping of charges against, Alexei Navalny and all the peaceful protestors, journalists and activists detained in the anti-corruption rallies held in Moscow and a number of Russian cities on 26 March and 2 April 2017; underlines the fact that Russian authorities bear full responsibility for the safety and wellbeing of those detained;

3. Underlines the fact that the sentences imposed are politically motivated, and urges the Russian judiciary to demonstrate its independence from political interference; calls on the Russian authorities to put an end to the harassment of journalists, political opponents and political and civil society activists, to fully respect international human rights obligations and to guarantee media freedom and freedom of assembly;

4. Notes the high turn-out in the widespread anti-corruption protests throughout the Russian Federation on Sunday, 26 March 2017, in particular the strong mobilisation of young people rallying against corruption and the increasingly authoritarian rule inside Russia; welcomes this engagement as a hopeful sign of increased interest in public and political matters;

5. Expresses strong concern that the detaining of Alexei Navalny demonstrates a case of the Russian authorities using the law on public assemblies to fast-track peaceful protesters to prison and commit subsequent systemic abuse;

6. Condemns the constant efforts to silence Alexey Navalny, and expresses support for his organisation’s efforts to raise awareness of, and combat, corruption in public institutions and among political representatives and public office holders; regards with deep concern the Court decision of February 2017, which effectively excludes Alexey Navalny from the political arena, further constrains political pluralism in Russia and raises serious questions as to the fairness of democratic processes in Russia;

7. Recalls that the freedom of peaceful assembly is a right, not a privilege, and that this right, together with the rights to freedom of opinion and expression, and freedom of association, plays a decisive role in the emergence and existence of an effective democratic system; calls on the Russian authorities to abide fully by the international commitments it has made, including in the Council of Europe and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), to uphold the basic freedoms of expression, association and peaceful assembly, which are fundamental rights enshrined in its Constitution, and to release without delay the peaceful demonstrators who have been detained;

8. Calls on the Russian authorities to put an end to any act of harassment, including at the judicial level, against political opponents, journalists and human rights defenders in the Russian Federation, and to ensure, in all circumstances, that they are able to carry out their legitimate activities without any interference;

9. Takes the view that several trials and judicial proceedings against opposition members and NGOs over the past years raise doubts about the independence and impartiality of the judicial institutions of the Russian Federation; urges Russian judicial and law enforcement authorities to carry out their duties in an impartial and independent manner, free of political interference;

10. Stresses that freedom of assembly in the Russian Federation is granted under Article 31 of the Russian Constitution and under the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), to which Russia is a party, thereby obliging the Russian authorities to respect it; calls on the Russian Federation to respect the principles of the rule of law, freedom of speech and freedom of assembly;

11. Recalls the importance of Russia’s full compliance with its international legal obligations, as a member of the Council of Europe and the OSCE, and with the fundamental human rights and the rule of law enshrined in the ECHR and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR);

12. Calls on the Russian Federation to amend legislation unduly restricting and criminalising the freedom of assembly; condemns the fact that the Russian Federation has also empowered its Constitutional Court, by means of new legislation of December 2015, to overturn the judgments of the European Court of Human Rights;

13. Notes the corruption allegations against leading Russian politicians; calls on the Commission, the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the Member States to take systematic action against any attempted money laundering or illegal assets inside the EU; equally instructs the Parliament’s Panama Papers Inquiry Committee to pay additional attention to any traces of suspect Russian money flows via EU-based banks;

14. Urges the Council and the Member States to develop a unified policy towards Russia that commits the Member States and the EU institutions to a strong common message on the role of human rights in the EU-Russia relationship and the need to end the crackdown on freedom of expression, assembly and association in Russia;

15. Calls on the VP/HR and the 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; calls on the Presidents of the Council and the Commission, as well as the VP/HR, to continue to follow such cases closely, to raise these issues in different formats and meetings with Russia, and to report back to Parliament on exchanges with the Russian authorities;

16. 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;

17. Condemns the terrorist attack in Saint Petersburg and asks its President to express its deep sympathy and solidarity with the victims, their families and the Russian people;

1. OJ C 68 E, 7.3.2014, p. 13. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Texts adopted, P7\_TA(2013)0284. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Texts adopted, P7\_TA(2014)0253. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. OJ C 274, 27.7.2016, p. 21. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. OJ C 300, 18.8.2016, p. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. OJ C 316, 30.8.2016, p. 126. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Texts adopted, P8\_TA(2016)0446. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Texts adopted, P8\_TA(2017)0087. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)