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*Committee on Foreign Affairs*

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# **DRAFT REPORT**

on a European Parliament recommendation to the Council and the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy concerning EU-Russia political relations (2023/2125(INI))

Committee on Foreign Affairs

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## DRAFT EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RECOMMENDATION

### to the Council and the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy concerning EU-Russia political relations (2023/2125(INI))

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to Parliament's recommendations and resolutions on Russia,
  - having regard to Rule 118 of its Rules of Procedure,
  - having regard to the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs (A9-0000/2023),
- A. whereas the inconsistency of the EU strategy to support and defend democracy in Russia has contributed to the Kremlin regime's suppression of all rights and freedoms of the Russian people over the last few decades, ultimately leading to the destruction of Russia's constitutional statehood and to the establishment of dictatorship in Russia;
- B. whereas the dictatorship in Russia has been one of the main causes of the Kremlin's war of aggression against Ukraine, which began with the occupation of Crimea in 2014 and continued with Russia's large scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022;
- C. whereas the EU's objective in this war is Ukraine's victory, to be accomplished with the support from a broad coalition of liberal democracies; whereas this victory is necessary not only for the sake of Ukraine, but for that of the whole democratic world;
- D. whereas since 24 February 2022, following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the EU has been providing substantial military and budgetary support to make Ukraine capable of defeating Russia and its proxies; whereas the EU has adopted 11 packages of sanctions against Russia to strategically weaken its military capacity; whereas the EU supports the establishment of a special tribunal to prosecute Russia's leaders and their allies for the crime of aggression against Ukraine; whereas the EU's financial institutions, together with those of G-7 countries, have frozen the assets and reserves of the Central Bank of Russia in response to Russia's aggression and these assets should be used to support Ukraine's reconstruction;
- E. whereas a decisive Ukrainian victory against Russia could open a window of opportunity for fundamental political changes in Russia, potentially led by the Russian people and resulting in the fall of the Kremlin regime; whereas this may lead to major political transformations in the broader region of Eastern Europe, including Belarus;
- F. whereas the EU, its partners and allies should not be afraid of these transformations;
- G. whereas in recent decades Putin and his Kremlin regime have been doing everything possible to convince the western democracies that democracy in Russia is not possible; whereas the strategy of liberal democracies should maintain that the Russian nation, like other Eastern European nations (such as Ukraine or Belarus), is aspiring, and is able, to live in a democracy;

- H. whereas the EU has to be ready for and help the transformation of Russia into a democracy when such an opportunity arises in the near to medium-term;
  - I. whereas democracy in Russia is the only way to ensure a sustainable peace in Europe once Russia is defeated in its war against Ukraine;
  - J. whereas Parliament's recommendation of 16 September 2021 on the direction of EU-Russia political relations<sup>1</sup> made recommendations to the EU institutions in six policy directions asking for the adoption of a comprehensive strategy of future relations between the EU and a democratic Russia, which will assist the Russian people in its struggle to have a normal life and transform Russia back into a democracy;
  - K. whereas the first step of effective assistance to transform Russia into a democracy should be for the EU to establish a regular and structured political dialogue with Russian democratic forces; whereas the new consultative group launched by the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative (VP / HR) in June 2023 between the EU and Belarusian democratic forces and civil society is a good model for such a dialogue;
  - L. whereas for this purpose on 5-6 June 2023 the largest political groups in the European Parliament organised the first Brussels dialogue conference with the participation of EU policymakers and Russian democratic forces; whereas the outcome of this conference was the launch of a regular Brussels dialogue between the EU and the Russian opposition;
  - M. whereas the EU should take a holistic view of the transformation of Russia into a democracy, which should include a broad array of democracy support measures before and after the change of power in Russia, including the ones necessary to sustain democratic change in Russia over the long term;
1. Calls for the EU institutions, in particular, the European External Action Service and the Commission, to prepare and pursue, together with Russian civil society and democratic forces, a strategy empowering the transformation of Russia into a democracy in the following three timeframes of power change in Russia;

### *The Year Before*

2. Emphasises that Ukraine's victory and Russia's defeat will open a window of opportunity for the transformation of Russia into a democracy and therefore the EU should strengthen the following policies:
  - (a) delivery of weapons to Ukraine;
  - (b) adoption and implementation of further sanction packages against Russia and its allies, especially on oil and gas;
  - (c) establishment of a special tribunal;
  - (d) adoption of a legal instrument to allow the use of immobilised Russian assets

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<sup>1</sup> [OJ C 117, 11.3.2022, p. 170.](#)

for the reconstruction of Ukraine;

- (e) accession of Ukraine to Euro-Atlantic structures;
3. Notes that the preparation for the transformation of Russia into a democracy has to be inclusive and be shaped in a regular and structured EU political dialogue with Russian civil society and democratic forces;
  4. Emphasises that the EU strategy needs to include mechanisms to strengthen its support to civil society and the political opposition both inside and outside Russia, and to improve Russian democratic forces' communication with Russian society and societies in liberal democracies around the globe;
  5. Invites the EU institutions to establish a 'democracy passport' and special visa arrangements allowing democratic opposition and civil society activists to continue their work in the EU member states while in exile;

### ***The Day After***

6. Notes that any democracy-support actions to be implemented immediately after the change of power in Russia have to involve the following milestone conditions that must be accepted by the transitional government of Russia in order for the EU to acknowledge that a real transition towards democracy in Russia is under way:
  - (a) withdrawal of Russian troops from all the occupied territories of Ukraine and other Eastern Partnership countries;
  - (b) release of all political prisoners and imprisoned civil society activists;
  - (c) restoration of media and political freedoms;
  - (d) holding of democratic elections;
  - (e) paying reparations to Ukraine and to victims of persecution in Russia;
  - (f) launch of an accountability agenda which will include prosecution, lustration, vetting and reconciliation processes, as well as the reform of public institutions, in particular in the justice and security sectors;
7. Notes that the EU's support to a transitional government in Russia should be provided in an inclusive manner, encompassing support to pro-democratic political, justice and security elites, intellectuals, grassroots civil society and democratic forces;
8. Notes that the EU should expect a broad coalition of democratic forces in Russia to immediately start work on preparing a new constitutional framework based on the principles of parliamentary democracy and delegation of important decision-making powers to the regions, and that this framework should include the major economic and social reforms Russia needs to facilitate the transition and build a solid basis for sustainable democracy over the long term;

### ***The Year After***

9. Notes that the long-term strategy to support and sustain political and socio-economic reforms in Russia has to be drafted and published by the EU without delay accompanied by the draft of a new generation EU agreement with a prospective democratic Russia, which should include the following:
  - (a) political cooperation;
  - (b) economic cooperation;
  - (c) trade;
  - (d) investments;
  - (e) sectoral policies;
  - (f) good neighbourly relations;
  - (g) joint working bodies;
- 10 Instructs its President to forward this recommendation to the Council, the Commission, the VP / HR, governments and parliaments of the Member States, the Eastern Partnership countries and the G7 countries, the Council of Europe, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, and the authorities of the Russian Federation.

## EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

This motion follows the European Parliament recommendations adopted in 2021<sup>2</sup> and proposes to the EU institutions a revised list of comprehensive recommendations for the EU's relations with Russia.

The motion highlights the EU's objective to support Ukraine's victory with the Western assistance, which will be essential for the democratic transformation of Russia and for the broader democratic world.

The victory of Ukraine and defeat of Russia will open a window of opportunity for the transformation to democracy in Russia. The motion invites the EU to increase its support to Ukraine to win the war and to have a long-term strategy to support democracy in Russia, putting an end to the long-lasting Kremlin's suppression of the Russian people. This will create positive waves of democratic transformation in the Eastern European region, including Belarus;

The motion calls upon the West not to fear these transformations, but to embrace the aspirations to democracy of peoples suppressed by the dictatorial regimes;

The motion proposes EU strategy within three timeframes: 1) 'The Year Before', 2) 'The Day After' and 3) 'The Year After' the democratic changes in Russia;

The first part (the year before) asks for an increased EU's assistance to Ukraine to win the Russian war of aggression, and calls on the EU to engage structurally and regularly with the Russian democratic forces to prepare for the changes in Russia after the Ukrainian victory. The EU should be capable of communicating with the Russian people in support of democracy, inside and outside Russia. The motion also invites the EU to establish a passport for democracy supporters;

Up until today, the EU has been actively supporting Ukraine since Russia's renewed invasion on 24 February 2022, by providing military and financial aid and implementing multiple sanctions against Russia. However, for an actual victory, the EU has to do more and be more comprehensive. The EU needs to deliver more weapons to Ukraine, expand the sanctions on Russia and its allies, especially on oil and gas, establish a special tribunal for the Kremlin regime, allow the use of immobilised Russian assets for the reconstruction of Ukraine, as well as begin the accession of Ukraine to the Euro-Atlantic structures, EU and NATO in particular;

In the second part (the day after), the motion lays down the criteria of democratic transformation, according to which the EU will launch a comprehensive package of democracy support measures for a transitional government in Russia. These include immediate withdrawal of the Russian troops, freeing of political prisoners and activists, restoration of media and political freedoms and holding of democratic parliamentary elections, making reparations to Ukraine and to the victims of persecution in Russia, launching the accountability and reconciliation process. In addition to this, the expectation will be that the democratic forces in Russia after the changes would form a broad coalition

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<sup>2</sup> European Parliament recommendation of 16 September 2021 to the Council, the Commission and the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy on the direction of EU-Russia political relations (2021/2042(INI)) [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2021-0383\\_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2021-0383_EN.pdf)

and start the preparation of a new constitutional framework that is open to a parliamentary democracy;

A final, third part of the motion (the year after), invites the EU to publish immediately a strategy to maintain democracy in Russia in the long-term perspective, which will take form of a draft new generation agreement between the EU and prospective democratic Russia. This agreement will include political and economic cooperation, trade and investments, sectoral policies, principles of good neighbourly relations, as well as joint implementing bodies.