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## MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

with request for inclusion in the debate on topical and urgent subjects of major importance

pursuant to Rule 50(1) of the Rules of Procedure

by Philippe Morillon, Alain Lamassoure, François Bayrou, Marielle de Sarnez, José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra, Giorgos Dimitrakopoulos and Doris Pack

on behalf of the PPE-DE Group

on press freedom in the world

**Resolution on press freedom in the world**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to the previous resolutions it has adopted on press freedom,
  - having regard to the Charter of Fundamental Rights which the Presidents of the Council, Commission and Parliament signed and proclaimed in Nice on 7 December 2000,
  - having regard to its report on the situation of human rights in the world in 1999,
  - having regard to the human rights clause included in the Association Agreements between the EU and non-member States and in the Cotonou Agreement,
  - having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,
  - having regard to the resolutions adopted by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, at its 57<sup>th</sup> session, on the right to freedom of opinion and expression, on the independence and impartiality of the judiciary and on arbitrary detention and executions,
  - having regard to the 11<sup>th</sup> International Press Freedom Day on 3 May 2001,
- A. whereas press freedom and freedom of information are extremely precious, and disregarding or impeding them is an attack on humanity, violates mankind's quest for truth and prevents its full development,
- B. whereas press freedom includes freedom of opinion and the freedom to receive or communicate information or ideas without interference from the State and without regard for frontiers,
- C. whereas access to a diversity of independent sources of information, like freedom of expression, is still too rarely recognised on this planet,
- D. whereas censorship, although less visible than physical sanctions, constitutes an equally inadmissible attack on free expression and the dignity of the individual,
- E. whereas, under Article 11 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, every individual has the right to free expression, and whereas the EU Member States respect the freedom and pluralism of the media,
- F. whereas at present 86 journalists are being detained arbitrarily, and their cases have not received a fair trial under international law,
- G. whereas 36 journalists have been killed or have disappeared since the beginning of 2000,
- H. noting that the conditions imposed on the independent press in Russia have worsened,

1. Firmly supports journalists who have been detained or have disappeared and their families,
2. Calls on all States to respect and defend the right of every person to exercise their right to freedom of opinion and expression,
3. Therefore calls for the immediate, unconditional release of the excessive number of journalists being arbitrarily detained,
4. Is deeply concerned at the unexplained disappearance of journalists, and urgently calls on the governments of the countries concerned to do everything possible to discover their whereabouts,
5. Stresses the need for independence and impartiality of the judiciary, pursuant to the resolution of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights,
6. Calls on the governments of the countries concerned to ensure that the journalists who have been detained are given a fair trial on the basis of a thorough and impartial enquiry in line with international norms;
7. Therefore calls for these trials to be held in public and for the presence of international observers to be authorised at the opening and throughout the whole course of the trial,
8. In this context, deplores the attacks on the diversity and freedom of the press in Russia and calls on the competent authorities to do everything possible to re-establish press freedom in that country,
9. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the ACP-EU Council, the United Nations Security Council and the governments of the countries concerned.