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MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

further to the Council and Commission statements

pursuant to Rule 37(2) of the Rules of Procedure

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on the situation in Chechnya

European Parliament resolution on the situation in Chechnya

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its earlier resolutions on the situation in Chechnya,
- having regard to the conclusions of the 1999 OCSE summit in Istanbul and the undertakings entered into by the Russian Federation on that occasion,
- A. whereas the extent and brutality of the violations of fundamental human rights being perpetrated by the Russian armed forces in Council have no parallel in recent history, not even in the darkest moments of the Bosnian tragedy,
- B. whereas in 1994, when the first Chechen war broke out, between 100 000 and 200 000 Chechens (10-20% of the population, mostly civilians) were killed, 170 000 fled abroad, and 260 000 became internal exiles in Chechnya, forced to live in inhuman conditions, while thousands are at this moment detained in the sadly celebrated 'filtration camps',
- C. deeply concerned at the reports of use by the Russian armed forces of weapons outlawed under the Geneva Convention, especially cluster bombs and chemical weapons,
- D. condemning unequivocally the existence within the Russian armed forces of full-blown 'death squads', in the form of the infamous 'kontrakniki', many of whom are felons who have had their sentences reduced in exchange for agreeing to 'fight' in Chechnya; stressing that these squads and other Russian army units are daily perpetrating large-scale 'mopping-up' operations which include summary executions of inhabitants of the zone attacked and rape, pillage and torture directed against the civilian population,
- E. welcoming, in this connection, the courage and high moral sense of the Russian conscripts and conscientious objectors who are deserting or are refusing to take part in the outrages of the Chechen war,
- F. whereas it is not acceptable that, despite the EP's repeated requests to Commissioner Poul Nielsen to undertake an emergency visit to Chechnya in order to carry out a full assessment of humanitarian aid requirements, in a gesture that would also symbolise the Union's determination not to ignore the ongoing tragedy in Chechnya, the Commissioner should not have found the time, between autumn 1999 and now, to make that visit,
- G. whereas the tragic circumstances of the Chechen refugees places the EU under an obligation to plan a large-scale humanitarian operation similar to that which it organised in Kosovo,
- H. calling on the authorities of the Member States to cease all procedures that might lead to the expulsion of Chechen asylum seekers from the EU to Russia or to any country from which they might be sent to Russia,

- I. whereas the Union's silence and inaction in the face of this tragedy are being perceived as a failure to defend and affirmed its values and principles vis-à-vis the Russian Federation, and are being taken by the Russian authorities as giving them carte blanche for abuse of whatever kind,
- J. whereas this failure on the Union's part has contributed substantially to the undermining of democratic institutions, the rule of law and civil society (starting with the media), to the benefit of a military-financial oligarchy whose power is by now deeply entrenched,
- K. whereas, two years on from the violent attacks in Moscow, attributed by the Russian authorities to the Chechens and used by them as a pretext to justify intervention in Chechnya, no evidence has come to light to prove Chechen responsibility, while there have from the beginning been numerous factors pointing to the involvement of the Russian secret services and of elements close to the centres of power,
- L. deeply disappointed at the failure of the announced launch of negotiations between the representatives of Presidents Putin and Maskhadov to produce more than a single meeting, in November 2000, which did not produce any kind of breakthrough,
- M. drawing attention to President Maskhadov's repeated expressions of his willingness to enter negotiations,
- N. whereas, even if President Putin's declarations of willingness to negotiate with his Chechen equivalent are taken in good faith, present EU policy is not such as to aid him in realising that goal in the face of a military lobby which is battening as never before on the tragedy of the Chechen people,
- O. whereas President Maskhadov and the Government and Parliament of the Republic of Chechnya came to power following elections whose legitimacy was recognised by the OCSE in 1997 and subsequently by the Russian Federation; whereas any attempt to hold new elections would be unacceptable in the present climate of terror imposed by the Russian troops in Chechnya,
- P. whereas the EU cannot ignore - still less after the 11th of September - the increasing frustration of the Chechen people in the face of the international community's indifference to its tragedy and the possibility that this frustration may give rise to actions having irreversible consequences,
- Q. whereas the gravity of the situation in Chechnya is now such as to make it not only a tragedy for the Chechen people but also a serious threat to democracy in Russia, to the stability of the entire region and to the security of humanity as a whole,
 - 1. Is more than ever convinced that this war can only be ended by a political solution reached through negotiations between the Russian authorities and the legitimate authorities of Chechnya, under the auspices of a third party;
 - 2. Stresses that unless a firm, urgent and concrete gesture in this sense is forthcoming from President Putin, the EU will be obliged to conclude that the Russian Federation has no real

desire to negotiate and is defying the wishes of the international community,

3. Calls on the Council, the Commission and the Member States to state that the immediate opening of negotiations between Presidents Putin and Maskhadov must be a priority for their policy towards the Russian Federation;
4. Calls on the Council and Commission to begin, as a matter of extreme urgency, an airlift operation between Chechnya and the EU which would make it possible for the Union, until such time as a peace agreement is reached by the two parties, to receive 200 000 Chechen refugees, to be distributed equitably among the fifteen Member States;
5. Calls for an invitation to be issued to the Russian and Chechen negotiators, under the auspices of the Delegation for relations with Russia and the Committee on Foreign Affairs;
6. Invites its President to inform President Maskhadov that the European Parliament is willing to receive him;
7. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the Council and the Governments and Parliaments of the Member States, to President Putin and the Russian Government and Duma, and to President Maskhadov and the Government and Parliament of Chechnya.