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MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statement by the Commission
pursuant to Rule 103(2) of the Rules of Procedure
by Rolandas Pavilionis, Konrad Szymański and Inese Vaidere
on behalf of the UEN Group
on the situation in Belarus

European Parliament resolution on the situation in Belarus

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Belarus,
 - having regard, in particular, to its resolution of 10 March 2005¹ in which it expressed its concern at the decision of the Belarusian authorities to revoke the license to operate as a legal entity of the European Humanities University in Minsk,
 - having regard to the action plan of its Delegation for relations with Belarus, stating the aim of supporting the University in exile,
 - having regard to the International Helsinki Federation's report of 27 June 2005,
 - having regard to the letter of 23 June 2005 from the Moscow-based Council for the Development of Civil Society and Human Rights,
 - having regard to the letter of 14 June 2005 from the International League for Human Rights,
 - having regard to the statement by the EU High Representative for the CFSP on 1 June 2005 on sentencing Belarusian opposition leaders,
 - having regard to Rule 103(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas in June 2005 opposition leaders Mikalay Statkevich, Pavel Sevyarynets and Andrey Klimov were sentenced to 18-36 months' compulsory labour for organising opposition rallies,
- B. whereas, on 12 May 2005, the leadership of the Union of Poles in Belarus were declared illegitimate by the Belarusian Ministry of Justice, a printing plant under instructions from the government refused to print the Polish weekly 'Głos znad Niemna' and fake issues were printed under the umbrella of the government,
- C. whereas in May a presidential decree banned the use of the words 'national' and 'Belarusian' in the names of organisations or titles of periodicals, and whereas this requires re-registration of independent newspapers such as 'Belorusskaya delovaya gazeta', 'Belorusskaya gazeta', 'Belorusskiy rynok' and 'Narodnaya volya'; whereas opposition newspapers are subject to harassment and punished with fines under alleged trivial pretexts,
- D. whereas 9 June 2005 saw the reopening in Vilnius of the European Humanities University, which had been closed down last year by the Belarusian authorities despite

¹ *Texts Adopted* of that date, P6_TA-PROV(2005)0080.

the fact that, as stated in the Parliament's resolution of 10 March 2005 on Belarus, it was a remarkable example of academic freedom and the pursuit of true democratic values in teaching and research programmes,

- E. whereas education is the main factor in the European success and no deep democratisation is possible without bringing up the new generation in the spirit of European values,
1. Condemns the recent crackdown on the opposition and considers the sentencing of the opposition leaders as a serious violation of human and political rights; urges the authorities of Belarus to revise their verdicts and release those sentenced as well as to release other political prisoners;
 2. Condemns the government's action against the Union of Poles in Belarus as an attempt to curb the largest non-governmental organisation and one of the few that were not controlled by the government; recalls that respect for minority rights extends to freedom of association and recognition of the elected statutory bodies of the organisation; deplors the government's attempt to take control of 'Głos znad Niemna';
 3. Deplores the new law demanding re-registration of opposition titles; points out that freedom of the press is a fundamental right and should not be subject to arbitrary political decisions based on such pretexts as the use of certain words in a title;
 4. Welcomes the inauguration of the European Humanities University for Belarusian students in exile in Vilnius and welcomes the efforts of the Republic of Lithuania to promote democracy and human rights through education;
 5. Calls on the Belarusian authorities to stop the expulsion of democratic youth from universities and other higher-education establishments, and declares its full support for those students who were expelled from such establishments for promoting democratic values and defending human rights and who started a hunger strike on 25 May 2005;
 6. Calls on the Commission and Member States to assist the European Humanities University in the pursuit of its teaching and research programmes; stresses the importance of creating an area of academic freedom for Belarusian students in the European Union; calls on European universities to enter into closer cooperation with the European Humanities University;
 7. Calls on the Member States to recognise degrees awarded by the European Humanities University as a confirmation of a high level of competence and outstanding academic skills, and expresses its determination to continue to provide extensive assistance to the European Humanities University;
 8. Supports the action plan adopted by the the European Parliament's Delegation for relations with Belarus and reiterates its call on the Council and the Commission to support independent broadcasting to the citizens of Belarus and the creation of an educational programme which would grant scholarships to young people and students from Belarus who would like to study in the European Union and financial support for

academic institutions that are prepared to host students from Belarus;

9. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the Government and Parliament of Belarus and the Parliamentary Assemblies of the OSCE and of the Council of Europe.