

# EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2004



2009

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*Session document*

7.12.2005

B6-0662/05/2005

## **MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION**

with request for inclusion in the agenda for the debate on cases of breaches of human rights, democracy and the rule of law

pursuant to Rule 115 of the Rules of Procedure

by Vittorio Agnoletto, Jonas Sjöstedt and Feleknaš Uca

on behalf of the GUE/NGL Group

on human rights in Russia

PE 368.178v00.00

**European Parliament resolution on human rights in Russia**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the European Union and Russia which entered into force on 1 December 1997,
- having regard to its previous resolutions on relations between the EU and Russia and the EU-Russia summits,
- having regard to the European Convention on Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,
- having regard to the draft Law “On Introducing Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of the Russian Federation“ (hereinafter referred to as the “Draft Law”), which was brought before the Parliament of the Russian Federation (Duma) on 8 November 2005,
- having regard to the open appeal of Russian non-commercial, non-governmental organizations,
- having regard to Rule 115(5) of its Rules of Procedure,
  - A. whereas enhanced cooperation and good neighbourly relations between the EU and Russia are of key importance to the stability, security and prosperity of the whole of Europe and whereas the values of democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights form the basis of the partnership and respect for these values is the prime prerequisite for the development in the building of a genuine strategic partnership,
  - B. whereas a strong and independent civil society is of vital importance for the proper functioning of any democratic state, including Russia,
  - C. whereas the European Parliament has repeatedly expressed its concern over stricter media control, restrictions on the freedom of the press and measures to strengthen the centralised powers at the expense of democratically elected bodies and diversified democratic procedures and whereas such developments represent dangers to a democratic society,
  - D. whereas, on 23 November 2005, Russia’s State Duma approved by an overwhelming majority a first reading draft law entitled “On introducing Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of the Russian Federation” amending the current legislation on the registration of NGOs and in particular the laws “On civil society organisations”, “On non commercial organisations” and “On closed administrative-territorial formations” and whereas the second reading of this law is due to take place on 16 December 2005,
  - E. whereas the adoption in second reading of the "Draft Law" would have serious consequences for the NGO's acting in Russia, i.e.:

- dangerously increase the intrusive power of the state by allowing unprecedented control over independent NGOs,
  - create an overly complicated registration procedure for NGOs and permit government officials to deny registration arbitrarily,
  - subject NGOs to inspections and audits at any time and without limitation,
  - liquidate NGOs unable to obtain registration,
  - outlaw foreign representative offices,
  - diminish the necessary checks and balances intrinsic to any democratic society,
- F. having regard to the experience of the EU Member States which allow informal groups to freely exist without demanding any notification or registration with the government, grant foreign citizens and persons without citizenship all substantive rights equal to their own citizens, specifically in regards to establishing and joining associations and allow foreign organizations to open representative offices and branches to carry out activities,
1. Points to the vital importance of a strong and independent civil society for the proper functioning of any democratic state and encourage the Russian Government to promote the development and work of NGOs as an important element of the civil society;
  2. Calls on the Russian Government to ensure respect for its obligations under the European Convention on Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights to protect freedom of expression and association respectively;
  3. Express its deep concern about the crackdown on NGOs that work on human rights in the context of the Chechnya conflict; urges the Russian government to end this crackdown and to end the official harassment and intimidation of such NGOs and their activists;
  4. Calls on the Russian Government thoroughly to investigate all cases of unlawful interference, harassment and intimidation of NGOs and human rights defenders;
  5. Calls on its interparliamentary delegation with Russia to contact its partners in the Russian Duma immediately to explain the position of the European Parliament;
  6. Calls on the Council and the Commission to raise the issue with priority in its political contacts with the Russian side and to make clear that the development of EU-Russia relations is closely linked to the respect for the democratic rules and human rights as well as the rule of law;
  7. Expresses its concern about the overall democratic development of Russian society; recalls its repeated criticism of the increasing lack of media freedom and media pluralism, restrictions on the right to organise public demonstrations and further accumulation of powers by the central government, as reflected by the appointment of

supreme court judges, governors and mayors of large towns by the President of Russia;

8. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Duma, the Russian Government, the Council, the Commission and the national parliaments of the Member States.