

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2004



2009

Session document

28.3.2006

B6-0239/2006

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on statements by the Council and Commission

pursuant to Rule 103(2) of the Rules of Procedure

by Konrad Szymański, Hanna Foltyn-Kubicka and Rolandas Pavilionis

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 to the statement by the OSCE/ODIHR International Election Observation Mission issued on 20 March 2006 concerning the presidential elections in Belarus,
 - having regard to the statement made by the European Council Presidency on behalf of the European Union on 22 March 2006 on the presidential elections in Belarus,
 - having regard to the statement made by the Council on 24 March 2006,
 - having regard to Rule 103(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the OSCE observation mission has declared that the recent presidential elections failed to meet the international commitments made by Belarus,
- B. whereas in the run-up to the elections many opposition activists were detained and the whole electoral process was conducted in an atmosphere of intimidation and harassment of the opposition,
- C. whereas the authorities did not provide equal opportunities for the candidates during the election campaign and serious breaches of the freedom of assembly and of the freedom of speech distorted the electoral process,
- D. whereas the number of international observers was restricted and the vote-counting could not be effectively monitored by either national or international observers,
- E. whereas the police used force against thousands of peaceful demonstrators who took to the streets to protest against the fraudulent elections; whereas hundreds of demonstrators, including one of the opposition candidates, Alexandr Kazulin, have been detained and sometimes beaten up or ill-treated, and over one hundred sentenced, with dozens missing,
- F. whereas the demonstrators, foreign sympathizers and journalists present at the rallies have been defamed and tried, without due respect for the right to defence, under allegations of provoking illegal rallies and vandalism; whereas politically-motivated investigations have been launched against the opposition leaders, including Alexandr Milinkevich, the main presidential candidate for the opposition,

1. Supports the statement made by the EU Council Presidency to the effect that the elections in Belarus were fundamentally flawed, and deplores the lack of the willingness on the part of the Belarus authorities to submit to an electoral test in the form of a free and undisturbed poll;
2. Points out that a fair and free electoral process has to be based on respect for the freedom of assembly, the freedom of speech and equal access for candidates to the media, as well as requiring independent observers to have access to polling stations, not least during the vote count;
3. Expresses its respect and support for all the people of Belarus who, despite repression, are actively engaged in the peaceful struggle for the democratic future of the country;
4. Calls on the Belarus authorities to release all opposition leaders, protesters, journalists and foreign sympathizers arrested during the electoral campaign and during the protests which followed the election, and to stop the abusive use of the judicial system against the protesters;
5. Demands that the Belarus Government put an end to the beating and ill-treatment of political prisoners and conduct a transparent investigation into the abusive use of force by police and security forces against demonstrators;
6. Requires that the Belarus authorities immediately make public the names of all the persons arrested, their whereabouts, and the accusations made against them; stresses that the Belarus authorities have an obligation to guarantee the right of all the arrested persons to consult their private lawyers, meet with members of their families and receive newspapers;
7. Calls on the Belarus authorities to stop the abusive use of criminal law to fight democratic opposition and expresses its grave concern at the application of the following articles of the Belarusian Criminal Code:
 - Article 367, which provides for 4 years imprisonment for slandering the President of the Republic, and which is being applied abusively, restricts freedom of thought and is disproportionate and anti-democratic;
 - Article 368, which provides for 2 years imprisonment for insulting the President of the Republic, and which is being applied abusively, restricts freedom of thought and is disproportionate and anti-democratic;
8. Supports the Council's decision to impose new restrictions on the Belarus authorities and especially on the people responsible for electoral fraud and repression, including president Lukashenko;
9. Calls on the Belarus authorities to release the presidential candidate Alexandr Kozulin, the Zubr Youth Resistance Movement activists Mikhail Marynich, Valery Levonevsky, Alexandr Vasilyev and Nikita Sasim and all the protesters arrested during the electoral campaign and during the protests which followed the elections;

10. Calls on the United Nations, the Council of Europe and the EU Member States to set up an international commission to investigate the disappearance of Yuri Zakharenko, Victor Gonchar, Anatoly Krasovsky and Dmitry Zavadski;
11. Welcomes the efforts of the Member States to provide assistance for the people subject to repression, and especially those of the Polish Government to guarantee that all students expelled from Belarusian universities for political reasons can continue their studies, and those of the Lithuanian Government to support the Belarusian European Humanities University in continuing its activities in exile in Vilnius;
12. Points out that Belarus, once reformed, will be able to benefit from cooperation within the framework of European political and economic cooperation and calls on the Council and the Commission to continue their support for the development of independent information sources for Belarus and their support for civil society, as well as for the stepping-up of people-to-people contacts;
13. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and 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.