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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 Bart Staes, Milan Horáček, Angelika Beer

on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group

on the recent repression of demonstrations in the Russian Federation

European Parliament resolution on the recent repression of demonstrations in the Russian Federation

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on the Russian Federation with regard, in particular, to the ones of 25 October and 13 December 2006,
- having regard to Rule 115(5) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas about 2000 people rallied in Moscow's Pushkin Square on 14 April 2007,
- B. whereas the so-called Dissenters' March was organized by Another Russia, an umbrella group which includes various movements with different political backgrounds,
- C. whereas minutes after the march began, the protesters found themselves outnumbered by 9000 policemen which according to witness reports pushed some demonstrators to the ground and beat them with batons, quickly dispersed the others and briefly detained those who sought to break through the riot-control lines,
- D. whereas among the hundreds arrested were the leader of the United Civic Front, former world chess champion Garry Kasparov and Maria Gaidar, the daughter of Russia's first post-Soviet reformist prime minister; many journalists, including ARD correspondent Stephan Stuchlik, who tried to capture the events and disseminate them to the West, were also beaten and arrested,
- E. whereas on 15 April another protest organised by the same organisation was broken up in a similar way in St. Petersburg, though Garry Kasparov was detained before the protest even began and some demonstrators were arrested pre-emptively en route to the event,
- F. whereas some journalists of private radio networks reported that their bosses had blocked live reports from these demonstrations and blacklisted opposition members from being mentioned,
- G. whereas Vladimir Lukin, Russia's human rights ombudsman, said that he believed police in both cities had exceeded their authority and whereas Valentina Matviyenko, the governor of St. Petersburg, ordered a probe into human rights violations at the rally in St. Petersburg,
- H. whereas as a member of the United Nations, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Council of Europe, the Russian Federation has undertaken to respect freedom of speech and of assembly; whereas observance of these principles is of particular importance in view of the forthcoming elections in Russia; whereas the EU is supposed to share with Russia a strategic partnership based on the values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law;

- I. whereas there is a lack of coherence vis-à-vis Russia since the criticism on the human rights situation raised in Brussels is rarely or very weakly raised by the European authorities once in Moscow,
1. Strongly condemns the violent crackdown by the Russian anti-riot police during last weekend's peaceful demonstrations in Moscow and St. Petersburg and calls on the Russian authorities to comply with their international obligations and to respect freedom of expression and freedom of assembly;
 2. Condemns in particular the repressive actions used by the security forces against journalists doing their professional duty; considers such assaults on the media as unacceptable;
 3. Calls on the Russian authorities to order a probe into the human rights violations at both rallies and to identify and punish those responsible for the violations;
 4. Calls on the Russian State Duma to set up a commission to investigate why such force was used against peaceful demonstrators;
 5. Expresses its deep concern at the growing control by the Kremlin of major broadcast media and at the creeping erosion of freedom of speech and access to broadcast media of opposition members;
 6. Regrets the timid reaction of concern by the EU Presidency and the Commission at the Moscow and Saint Petersburg events; deplores the attitude of those European Heads of states that while visiting Moscow failed to address human rights issues with their Russian counterpart;
 7. Calls on Council and Commission to lodge a protest with the Russian authorities and to raise the issue of respect of basic freedoms in the upcoming EU-Russia summit and in the next regular meetings with Russian officials;
 8. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the Member States and the Government and the Parliament of the Russian Federation.