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MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

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

pursuant to Rule 113(2) of the Rules of Procedure

by André Brie, Gabriele Zimmer, Pedro Guerreiro, Marco Rizzo and Miguel
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on behalf of the GUE/NGL Group

on the relocation of the World War II memorial in Tallinn and relations
between Estonia and Russia

European Parliament resolution on the relocation of the World War II memorial in Tallinn and relations between Estonia and Russia

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the report by Amnesty International on Estonia of 7 December 2006 which criticises the fact that the Russian-speaking minority, which represents one-third of the Estonian population, has restricted minority rights,
 - having regard to the Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination of 19 October 2006 on Estonia, which contain a series of recommendations on the elimination of discrimination against persons belonging to minorities,
 - having regard to the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations,
 - having regard to Rule 113(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the Government of Estonia has decided to remove a Soviet memorial commemorating those who lost their lives to bring about the defeat of the Nazi regime, which had stood for decades in the centre of the Estonian capital, to a military cemetery,
- B. whereas this decision was taken without proper consultation of the inhabitants of Tallinn, ignoring the views of major sections of the population of the town,
- C. whereas the Estonian authorities did not allow peaceful demonstrations against the removal of the monument and thereby contributed to the escalation of the protests,
- D. whereas the Estonian police used disproportionate force against the demonstrators and arrested leaders of the organisations opposing the removal of the monument, leading to fresh violence and tensions in the streets of Estonian cities, and whereas there are reports of the mistreatment of arrested people,
- E. whereas, following the events in Tallinn, the normal functioning of the Estonian Embassy in Moscow has been blocked and several of its diplomats, including the head of the mission, as well as diplomats from other EU Member States have been physically attacked by demonstrators surrounding the embassy; whereas Russian politicians have reacted with disproportionate verbal attacks and economic threats,
- F. whereas these events have led to a deep crisis in relations between Estonia and Russia, with serious consequences for EU-Russia relations,
1. Condemns the removal by the Estonian Government of the World War II memorial;

takes the view that this act by the Estonian Government reflects a regrettable lack of sensitivity to the seriousness of Nazi crimes and an unacceptable lack of respect for all those who fought against fascism;

2. Expresses its concern that at the same time the Estonian authorities have shown their indifference to the crimes committed by Estonian Nazi collaborators, in particular their participation in crimes against the Jewish population, and annual demonstrations by neo-fascist organisations which reappeared after Estonia became independent; insists that the problem of non-citizenship affecting thousands of people in the Baltic countries should be resolved;
3. Condemns the disproportionate use of force by the Estonian police against peaceful demonstrators, whilst underlining that riots and vandalism are unjustifiable; is concerned at the arrest of people opposing the removal of the monument; calls for a speedy, comprehensive and independent inquiry into the violent events in Tallinn;
4. Is alarmed at the fact that the ongoing discrimination against and exclusion of the Russian-speaking minorities in Estonia and the other Baltic countries and the lack of dialogue has led to deep mistrust and dangerous tensions between the majority and those Russian-speaking minorities; insists that the Russian-speaking minorities in the Baltic countries must be granted the minority rights commonly accepted in the European Union; calls on the Estonian Government to follow the recommendations contained in the Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination of 19 October 2006 with a view to changing this unacceptable situation;
5. Calls for a constructive and comprehensive discussion of the historical events of the last century in the Baltic region, involving all the parties concerned, with a view to overcoming the dividing lines within the Baltic societies and between the Baltic countries and Russia;
6. Deeply deplores the reactions in Russia, in particular the breach of the obligations deriving from the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations; calls on Russia to guarantee the protection of foreign diplomats and the normal functioning of foreign embassies; calls on all the parties concerned to contribute to the de-escalation of the tensions between Estonia and Russia and the normalisation of relations;
7. Underlines the importance of mutually advantageous, good-neighbourly relations between the EU Member States and Russia; notes that EU-Russia relations are at a critical stage and therefore calls on all partners to take a constructive and results-oriented approach;
8. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the Member States and the Government and Parliament of the Russian Federation.