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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 Bernd Posselt, Jana Hybášková, Christopher Beazley, Tunne Kelam,  
Thomas Mann

on behalf of the PPE-DE Group

on the arrest of demonstrators following the Presidential election in Russia

**European Parliament resolution on the arrest of demonstrators following the Presidential election in Russia**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to the objectives of consolidating democracy and political freedoms in the Russian Federation, as laid down in the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the Russian Federation, of the other part (PCA), which entered into force in 1997 and expires in 2007,
  - having regard to the EU-Russia human rights dialogue,
  - having regard to its previous resolutions on Russia, and in particular to its resolution of 25 October 2006 on EU-Russia relations following the murder of the Russian journalist Anna Politkovskaya, its resolution of 13 December 2006 on the EU-Russia Summit in Helsinki on 24 November 2006, and its resolution of 26 April 2007 on Russia,
  - having regard to Rule 115(5) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas Mikhail Kasyanov, former Prime Minister and current leader of the People's Democratic Union, registered as a candidate on 14 December 2007 but was later disqualified by the Central Election Commission, which stated that too many of the 2 million signatures of support were forged; whereas Kasyanov appealed the decision to the Supreme Court which rejected the appeal on 6 February 2008,
- B. whereas the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, in its capacity as an international election standards watchdog (ODIHR), had to cancel its planned monitoring mission of the election because of severe restrictions on its observers by the Russian Government,
- C. whereas the Russian authorities, in the run-up to the parliamentary and presidential elections, put increased pressure on opposition groups and non-governmental organisations to refrain from any activities directed against the president and the government and to prevent the media from reporting any such activities,
- D. whereas democracy has been weakened in Russia, in particular by the bringing of all major TV stations and most radio stations under government control, the spread of self-censorship among the print media, new restrictions on the right to organise public demonstrations and a worsening climate for NGOs,
- E. whereas the right of free assembly is a fundamental part of the democratic principles and human rights standards to which Russia has committed itself to upholding and to which it has repeatedly expressed its commitment, whereas those principles and values are also the basis for the strategic partnership between the EU and Russia,
- F. 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 assembly,

G. whereas on 3 March 2008 Other Russia, a coalition of opposition parties, organised a "March of Dissent" to protest against Sunday's presidential elections in Russia,

H. whereas the city authorities had refused to authorise the protest saying that the pro-Kremlin Young Russia group had already planned gatherings at every large meeting point in the capital,

I. whereas Other Russia decided to go ahead with the march and had said it would appeal against the city's decision,

J. whereas at least 17 opposition protesters were arrested as riot police crushed the rally in Turgenevskaya Square in central Moscow, whereas Nikita Belykh, the head of the Union of Right Forces, was among those detained,

K. whereas the protesters - who were heavily outnumbered by the hundreds of riot police and militias wearing helmets and carrying riot shields - were grabbed and forced onto buses,

1. Deplores the fact that the run-up to the presidential election in particular was marked by unfair treatment of opposition candidates;

2. Regrets the fact that the Russian authorities regarded the intended monitoring mission of OSCE / ODIR as an intrusion into internal affairs; voices its strong support for the important work of these missions;

3. Criticises the disproportionate use of force by police and riot police and militias against the demonstrators on 3 March 2008 in Moscow and calls on the authorities to investigate these incidents and to bring those responsible to justice;

4. Asks for the immediate release of all those demonstrators who are still being detained;

5. On this occasion, asks the newly elected Russian president, Dimitri Medvedev, to reassess the treatment of imprisoned opposition personalities (such as Michail Chodorkovski and Platon Lebedev); underlines the fact that this would facilitate the elaboration of an even close partnership between the Russian Federation and the European Union;

6. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and Commission and the Russian Government.