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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 Tunne Kelam, Zbigniew Zaleski, Christopher Beazley, Michael Gahler, Edward McMillan-Scott, Eija-Riitta Korhola, Colm Burke, Charles Tannock, Bernd Posselt

on behalf of the PPE-DE Group

on attacks on human rights defenders in Russia/The murder trial of Anna Politkovskaya

European Parliament resolution on attacks on human rights defenders in Russia/The murder trial of Anna Politkovskaya

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the declaration of the presidency of the Council of the European Union on the house search of the premises of the organisation Memorial in St. Petersburg on 4 December 2008,
- having regard to Rule 115(5) of its Rules of Procedure,

A. Whereas Russia is a member state of the Council of Europe and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) that has committed itself to fully respecting human and citizens' rights;

B. Whereas there is information about the progressive deterioration of the situation of human rights defenders and also about difficulties faced by the NGOs that are active in the promotion of human rights;

C. Whereas numerous complaints by Russian citizens have been addressed to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg which confirmed that human rights had been breached in a number of its judgments;

D. Whereas on October 28, Otto Messmer, leader of the Russian Jesuit order and Victor Betancourt, an Ecuadorean priest were brutally murdered in their Moscow apartment;

E. Whereas a leading Russian human rights lawyer, Karinna Moskalenko, who has successfully represented the cases of 30 Russian citizens in the Strasbourg human rights court, fell victim in mid-October to an attempted poisoning by mercury deposited in her car in Strasbourg;

F. Whereas on August 31, 2008, the owner of an Ingush independent website, Magomed Evloev was killed while in police custody;

G. Whereas numerous attempts on the life of human rights defenders have been registered from July to October 2008, including the Ingush opposition leader Akhmed Kotiev, human rights defender Zurab Tsechoev from Ingushetia, human rights activist Dmitrii Kraiukhin from Orel city, human rights activist Stanislav Dmitrievski from Nizhni Novgorod;

H. Whereas on December 3, 2008, the St. Petersburg offices of the Research and Information Centre "Memorial", which has for 20 years conducted the research of Stalinist repressions in the Soviet Union, were raided by masked men from the Russian General Prosecutor's Office and as a result of this raid, hard drives and CDs containing the entire database about thousands of victims were taken away with no inventory of the confiscated documentation made;

I. Having regard to the second anniversary of the murder of the widely respected independent investigative journalist Anna Politkovskaya, whose brutal killing has not yet been fully investigated and solved in a satisfactory way;

J. Having regard to the fact that investigations of the murder of the British citizen Aleksander Litvinenko by using radioactive polonium have been blocked by the uncooperative attitude of the Russian authorities;

K. Whereas in these cases police investigators and judicial authorities of the Russian Federation have failed to demonstrate a full commitment to identifying the perpetrators and in bringing them to justice in the case of investigations into cases against human rights defenders;

L. Whereas according to the latest statements of Russian human rights groups and the American "Human Rights First", there is an urgent need not only to further enhance the role of EU - Russia human rights consultations but also to present the most urgent cases at the EU - Russia summit meetings;

1. Expresses its grave concern about numerous attacks on the lives of human rights defenders in Russia, including lawyers who are representing citizens' rights;
2. Condemns the house search of the premises of the organisation Memorial in St. Petersburg on 4 December 2008; asks the Russian authorities and the St. Petersburg Public Prosecutor's Office to return to the Research and Information Centre "Memorial" without delay eleven hard drives and CDs that were taken from the Centre during a police raid on December 3th, 2008 and that contain invaluable data about more than 50.000 victims of Stalinist era repressions;
3. Draws attention to the growing trends of xenophobia which have resulted in more than 100 people killed in 2008 on the basis of their race, nationality and religion according to the Moscow Bureau for Human Rights and to the absence of effective condemnation of such hate crimes by Russian authorities;
4. Is deeply concerned by the brutal use of police violence during the second weekend of December in Moscow and St. Petersburg against peaceful demonstrators who expressed their support to the newly founded "Solidarity" movement;
5. Notes with concern the development of an official campaign to re-write Soviet history and, in fact, rehabilitate the Stalinist regime;
6. Is alarmed about the attempt in October on the life of human rights lawyer Karinna Moskalenko and her family and appeals to both the French and Russian authorities in order to identify the perpetrators and their motives;
7. Is convinced that the activities of human rights lawyers who are representing the cases of alleged human rights abuses and who have to take high personal risks in continuing their mission should be afforded the highest respect and protected by the state and supported by the

international community;

8. On the second anniversary of the murder of the Russian independent journalist Anna Politkovskaya, recalls its resolution of October 25, 2006 and pays tribute to the courage and mission of this symbol of honesty and conscientiousness whose life work needs continuous support and acknowledgement;

9. Expresses its disappointment that the trial is open only to a limited number of journalists and closed to television journalists; calls on the court to fully respect the jury's decision and open the trial to all journalists and media;

10. Expects the court to investigate not only who committed and assisted in the killing but also who had ordered the murder of Anna Politkovskaya;

11. Stresses its previous position that human rights situation in Russia should be an integral and equally important part of the EU - Russia political agenda;

12. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Parliaments and governments of the Member States, the government and Parliament of the Russian Federation, the OSCE and the Council of Europe.