



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2009 - 2014

Plenary sitting

12.1.2011

B7-0044/2011

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statement by the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

pursuant to Rule 110(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on the situation in Belarus

Elmar Brok, José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra, Ioannis Kasoulides, Jacek Protasiewicz, Laima Liucija Andrikienė, Elena Băsescu, Piotr Borys, Michael Gahler, Andrzej Grzyb, Gunnar Hökmark, Tunne Kelam, Lena Kolarska-Bobińska, Krzysztof Lisek, Cristian Dan Preda, Ria Oomen-Ruijten, Jacek Saryusz-Wolski, Peter Šťastný, László Tőkés, Traian Ungureanu, Corien Wortmann-Kool, Paweł Zalewski
on behalf of the PPE Group

European Parliament resolution on the situation in Belarus

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on the situation in Belarus, in particular that of 17 December 2009 on Belarus,
 - having regard to Council decision 2010/639/CFSP of 25 October 2010 concerning restrictive measures against certain officials of Belarus, extending both the restrictive measures and suspension until 31 October 2011,
 - having regard to the Conclusions of the Foreign Affairs Council of 25 October 2010,
 - having regard to the Statement of the preliminary findings and conclusions on the presidential election in Belarus by the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR) and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE PA) as of 20 December 2010,
 - having regard to the Commission Communication of 3 December 2008 concerning the Eastern Partnership (COM(2008)0823),
 - having regard to the Declaration on the Eastern Partnership issued by the European Council at its meeting of 19-20 March 2009 and to the Joint Declaration issued at the Prague Eastern Partnership Summit of 7 May 2009,
 - having regard to the Commission statement of 21 November 2006 on the European Union's readiness to renew its relationship with Belarus and its people within the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP),
 - having regard to Rule 110(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the Prague Declaration – co-signed by the Belarusian government – states the following: ‘The participants of the Prague Summit agree that the Eastern Partnership will be based on commitments to the principles of international law and to fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law and the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms’,
- B. whereas the Council on 25 October 2010 ‘called on the Belarusian authorities to ensure that the (presidential) elections are conducted in line with international norms and standards for democratic elections and Belarus’s commitments in the OSCE and the UN’,
- C. whereas the Council ‘reaffirmed its readiness to deepen its relations with Belarus depending on developments in Belarus towards democracy, human rights and the rule of law as well as its readiness to assist the country in attaining these objectives. Subject to progress in Belarus in these areas, it stood ready to take steps towards upgrading contractual relations with Belarus’,

- D. whereas the Council, after evaluating developments in Belarus, has decided to extend the restrictive measures against certain Belarusian officials but to suspend the application of the restrictions on travelling to the EU, both until 31 October 2011,
- E. whereas Belarus has committed itself to consider the recommendations made by the OSCE and its Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) regarding improvements to its electoral law in order to bring it into line with international standards for democratic elections and to consult about the proposed amendments with the OSCE; whereas the National Assembly of Belarus passed a reform of the Electoral Code without prior consultation of the OSCE,
- F. whereas, according to the OSCE PA and OSCE/ODIHR Statement of the preliminary findings and conclusions on the presidential election in Belarus, *'The presidential election indicated that Belarus still has a considerable way to go in meeting its OSCE commitments, although some specific improvements were made. Election night was marred by detentions of most presidential candidates, and hundreds of activists, journalists and civil society representatives.'*,
- G. whereas the police crackdown on the demonstration of 19 December 2010 and further measures taken by the law enforcement agencies against democratic opposition, free media and civil society activists were condemned by the President of the European Parliament, the EU High Representative and the UN General Secretary,
1. Underlines that the Preliminary Conclusions of the OSCE PA and OSCE/ODIHR statement note the following: *'While the overall voting process was assessed as good, the process deteriorated significantly during the vote count undermining the steps taken to improve the election. (...) The count was largely conducted in a non-transparent manner, generally in silence, which undermined its credibility. In many cases, observers were restricted and did not have a real opportunity to observe the counting. In some cases the figures recorded in the results of polling station protocols were different upon arrival at the Territorial Election Commissions (TEC)'*;
 2. In this context calls on the Belarusian authorities to repeat the presidential elections;
 3. Condemns the use of brutal force by the police and KGB services against the protesters on the Election Day and in particular expresses its indignation over a brutal attack on Mr Niakliayeu, both examples of the severe violation of basic democratic principles such as freedom of assembly and freedom of expression, as well as of human rights;
 4. Condemns the Belarusian authorities for failing to provide unhindered access of the detainees to the legal and most of all, medical assistance;
 5. Condemns the arrests and detentions of over 700 protesters and seven of the nine alternative presidential candidates;
 6. Is concerned about the criminal proceedings being carried out by the Belarusian authorities against almost all presidential candidates, leaders of the democratic opposition (Anatol Liebigdzka and Pavel Seviarynets) as well as great number of civil society

activists, journalists, teachers and students that could lead to sentences of up to 15 years in prison;

7. Condemns the repressions and harassment of the civil society activists which followed Election Day, including mass searches in private apartments, offices of the media outlets and the civil society organisations, expulsions from universities and workplaces;
8. Demands an immediate and unconditional release of all those detained during Election Day and in its aftermath as well as the prisoner of conscience recognised by Amnesty International (Mikalay Autukhovich);
9. Regrets the decision of the Belarusian authorities to terminate the mission of the OSCE Office in Belarus and calls on the Belarusian authorities to withdraw this decision immediately and reopen the office;
10. Condemns the blockage of a number of major Internet websites, including networking channels and opposition websites, on Election Day in Belarus; underlines that current media legislation in Belarus does not comply with international standards and therefore calls on the Belarusian authorities to revise and amend it;
11. Calls on the Council, the Commission and the EU High Representative to review EU policy towards Belarus including economic relations; underlines that the orientation of the ENP and national assistance for Belarus should be redirected in order to ensure the appropriate support for the civil society; reiterates the importance of the effective use of the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights;
12. In this context calls on the Council, the Commission and the EU High Representative and Member States to support democracy in Belarus by a significant increase of financial aid for independent media (including TV Belsat, European Radio for Belarus, Radio Racyja and others) and civil society organisations, to increase the number of scholarships for Belarusian students, repressed for their civic activities and expelled from universities, and to contribute to the 'Solidarity with Belarus' donors' conference in Warsaw (2/02/2010) and following the conference in Vilnius;
13. Strongly urges the Commission to continue and increase financial aid to the European Humanities University (EHU) based in Vilnius, Lithuania, which is ready to accept students expelled from Belarusian universities following the violent crackdown after the presidential elections on 19-20 December 2010 in Belarus;
14. Calls on the EC to develop a mechanism of registration of NGOs that are denied registration in Belarus for political reasons, in order to enable them to benefit from EC programmes. Due to the need for strengthening the civil society in Belarus, the Belarusian NGOs' participation in the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum should be continued;
15. Calls on the European Commission to halt the ongoing cooperation and to withdraw its assistance provided to the state-owned media in Belarus;
16. Encourages the European Commission to take an initiative to analyse the possibilities for establishing a special support mechanism for effective and direct financial and technical

assistance for civil society, independent media and political organisations in Belarus;

17. Calls on the Council, the Commission and the EU High Representative to immediately re-apply the visa ban on the leading Belarusian authorities, expanding it to the state officials, members of the judiciary and security officers who can be considered responsible for the vote-rigging and post-election brutal repressions and arrests of members of the opposition (the sanctions should remain in force minimum until all political prisoners and detainees are released and exempted from charges); welcomes the good example of the Polish Government and the Lithuanian Parliament which imposed their own travel restrictions on the representatives of the Minsk regime and at the same time simplified access to the European Union for Belarusian citizens;
18. Encourages all European democratic governments, for example Switzerland and Norway, to impose similar sanctions on the representatives of the Belarusian regime; expresses its disappointment with the statement by the President of Russian Federation, made on 20 December 2010;
19. Calls on the Commission, the Council and the EU HR to freeze all the macro financial aid provided via IMF loans as well as lending operations by EIB and EBRD programmes;
20. Calls on the Commission, the Council and the EU HR to suspend Belarusian participation in Eastern Partnership activities until genuine changes will take place in Belarus, starting with the unconditional liberation of all members of political opposition;
21. Calls on the Commission, the Council and the EU HR and Members States to limit contacts with the Belarusian authorities to the absolute minimum;
22. Calls on the Commission, the Council and the EU HR to freeze assets to BELTETH Export and other arms export enterprises for Belarus;
23. Calls on the Commission, the Council and the EU HR to intensify work on the negotiations directives for visa facilitation and readmission agreements (excluding diplomatic passports) in order to enhance people-to-people contacts;
24. Invites the international partners of the European Union to adopt a common position and follow a similar strategy towards the Belarusian regime;
25. Expresses its opinion that sport events, like the World Ice Hockey Championships in 2014, should not be held in Belarus while there are political prisoners in that country;
26. Calls on the European Union partners to join efforts in creating an international commission for an objective and detailed investigation of the events of 19-20 December 2010;
27. Supports the request of the Belarusian opposition to create an office for political representation of Belarusian democratic opposition and civil society in Brussels; underlines that adequate financial support for the office should be established by the EU community and its partners;

28. Underlines that Belarus is welcome in the European family as long as the rule of law, democracy and human rights are respected in this country;
29. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments of the Member States, the President, Government and Parliament of Belarus and the Parliamentary Assemblies of the Council of Europe and the OSCE.