



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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Plenary sitting

10.5.2011

B7-0338/2011

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 122 of the Rules of Procedure

on Belarus

Marietje Schaake, Kristiina Ojuland, Marielle De Sarnez, Leonidas Donskis, Ramon Tremosa i Balcells, Johannes Cornelis van Baalen, Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy
on behalf of the ALDE Group

European Parliament resolution on Belarus

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on the situation in Belarus, in particular that of 20 January 2011 and 10 March 2011 on Belarus,
- having regard to Council decision on 31 January 2011 (2011/69/CFSP) on restrictive measures against certain officials of Belarus,
- having regard to the Conclusions of the Foreign Affairs Council of 31st January 2011,
- having regard to the final report on 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 22 February 2011,
- having regard to the statements by the EU High Representative Catherine Ashton on crackdown on independent media in Belarus, 10 April 2011, and on recent trials and sentences in Belarus, 18 March 2011;
- having regard to Rule 122(5) of its Rules of Procedure,
 - A. whereas Belarus is a European country, an important EU neighbour and its people have a strong European determination;
 - B. whereas EU High Representative and President of the European Parliament have expressed their condolences over the tragic Minsk metro explosion that occurred on 11 April 2011;
 - C. whereas Belarus is bound by international 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 freedom, in particular freedom of expression and freedom of press;
 - D. whereas according to the OSCE PA and OSCE/ODIHR final report on the presidential election in Belarus, the elections failed to meet OSCE commitments;
 - E. whereas the police crackdown on the demonstration of 19th December 2010 and further measures taken by the law enforcement against democratic opposition, free media and civil society activists are yet to be investigated and were condemned by the European Parliament, EU High Representative, UN General Secretary;
 - F. whereas repressions against democratic opposition, free media, civil society activists, human rights defenders have further increased ignoring repeated calls by the

international community to halt it immediately; whereas this situation constitutes a serious breach to numerous international commitments of Belarus;

- G. whereas agreement was signed for developing the Russian-Belarusian nuclear power plant project in Astraviec, 15 km from the border with Lithuania, to be commissioned in 2018;
1. Expresses condolences to the people of Belarus over the Minsk metro explosion, extending its sympathy to the families of the victims of this heinous crime;
 2. Condemns the ongoing detention and expresses its serious concern about the criminal proceedings being carried out by the Belarusian authorities against leaders of the democratic opposition as well as great number of civil society activists, journalists, bloggers, teachers and students;
 3. Considers all charges against the Presidential candidates Vladimir Neklyayev, Vitaly Rymashevsky, Nikolai Statkevich, Dmitry Uss and Andrei Sannikov illegal and inadmissible; calls for the candidates to be acquitted and freed from any further persecution;
 4. Condemns continuous repressions and harassment of the civil society activists; deploras recent sentences against civil society activists Ales Kirkevich, Paval Vinahradau, Andrei Pratasienya, Dzmitry Drozd, Uladzimir Khamichenka, Zmitser Dashkevich, Eduard Lobau, Mikhita Likhavic; calls for their immediate and unconditional release;
 5. Condemns the reported use of torture techniques by the police and KGB services against the opposition activists and journalists, calls for an independent medical expert to visit all detainees to ensure they are receiving adequate medical assistance;
 6. Condemns the absence of any independent investigation into the use of brutal force by the police and KGB services against the protesters on the Election Day; welcomes the interim report of Dr. Neil Jarman Special Rapporteur of the Committee on International Control over the Human Rights Situation in Belarus and is appalled by the fact that human rights defenders from different OSCE countries were again detained in Minsk, in the office of “Viasna” Human Rights Center ahead of a press-conference where the Interim Report on events of 19th December, 2010 in Minsk, was to be presented;
 7. Demands the immediate release of Andrzej Poczobut, journalist of Belsat television and Gazeta Wyborcza newspaper;
 8. Calls on the Council, the Commission and the EU High Representative to update the visa ban and asset freeze list to those involved in the latest violations and human rights abuses relating to the persecution of democratic opposition, civil society activists and journalists; calls upon the Council, the Commission and the EU HR/VP to ensure the maximum level of implementation and enforcement of these targeted economic sanctions, and to inform the Parliament about whether Member States act in full compliance with these sanctions;

9. Calls on the European Commission to halt the ongoing cooperation and to withdraw its assistance provided to the state-owned media in Belarus;
10. Welcomes the initial steps by the European Commission to establish a special support mechanism for effective and direct financial and technical assistance for the civil society, independent media and democratic political organisations in Belarus;
11. Calls for the establishment of a pan-European Belarus Forum that would serve as a structure to promote democratic reform in Belarus and would include democratic opposition, NGOs, independent media and their interlocutors in the EU;
12. Calls on the Council, the Commission and the EU High Representative to suspend Belarus' participation in the Eastern Partnership and other EU programmes and freezing of the Joint Interim Plan; considers it paramount to further intensify people-to-people contacts and streamline EU support through the civil society;
13. Calls upon the Council, the Commission and the EU HR/VP to ensure that no arms trade, in conformity with imposed arms embargoes, between Belarus and Libya or Syria will take place, calls for an investigation into alleged arms trade with Libya;
14. Takes note of the Belarus government intentions to build a nuclear power plant in the proximity of the external border and a capital of the EU Member State; encourages Belarusian authorities to ensure full compliance with relevant environmental and nuclear safety standards; calls on the European Council and the European Commission to ensure that unfair competition and price dumping, due to lower environmental and nuclear security standards, is not tolerated in energy import to EU from Belarus;
15. Considers that defiant and blunt violations of human rights by the Lukashenko regime require the Council to revisit its position on the introduction of smart and targeted economic sanctions on Belarusian government owned companies;
16. Regrets that Belarusian authorities by not fulfilling their commitments to the Prague Declaration of the Eastern Partnership Summit precluded participation of Belarussian representatives in the established EURONEST Parliamentary Assembly;
17. 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.