



Plenary sitting

B9-0391/2020

24.11.2020

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

with request for inclusion in the agenda for a debate on cases of breaches of human rights, democracy and the rule of law

pursuant to Rule 144 of the Rules of Procedure

on The continuous violations of human rights in Belarus, in particular the murder of Raman Bandarenka

(2020/2882(RSP))

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on behalf of the ECR Group

B9-0391/2020

European Parliament resolution on The continuous violations of human rights in Belarus, in particular the murder of Raman Bandarenka

(2020/2882(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Joint Declarations of the Eastern Partnership Summits;
 - having regard to its resolutions on Belarus, in particular those of 24 November 2016¹ and 6 April 2017² on the situation in Belarus, of 19 April 2018 on Belarus³, and of 4 October 2018 on the deterioration of media freedom in Belarus, notably the case of Charter 97⁴ and recommendation to the Council, the Commission and the VPC/HR on relations with Belarus of 21 October 2020;
 - having regard to the fraudulent presidential election that took place in Belarus on 9 August,
 - having regard to the US Embassy in Belarus statement of 13 November 2020 on the death of Raman Bandarenka,
 - having regard to the European Parliament’s 2020 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought awarded to the democratic opposition in Belarus on 22 October 2020;
 - having regard to the OSCE report of 5 November 2020 on Alleged Human Rights Violations related to the Presidential Elections of 9 August 2020 in Belarus,
 - having regard to rule 144 of the Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas after the rigged elections the people of Belarus as well as the democratic world do not recognize Lukashenka as a legitimate leader of Belarus; whereas Luksashenka refused to conduct a meaningful dialogue with the Coordination Council and Belarusian civil society and chose brutality and oppressions as the only way to remain in power;
- B. whereas the situation in the country remains volatile, with peaceful protests after the falsified presidential elections continuing on almost daily basis;
- C. whereas since beginning of the protests, an estimated 30 000 people have been detained, many of them badly beaten; whereas there were also reports of torture, rape, kidnapping and targeted killings; whereas the regime exercises full control over the law enforcement , the prosecutor general and the Supreme Court and the system proved that it works to defend the current political regime, including those responsible for bloody repressions;

¹ OJ C 224, 27.6.2018, p. 135.

² OJ C 298, 23.8.2018, p. 60.

³ OJ C 390, 18.11.2019, p. 100.

⁴ OJ C 11, 13.1.2020, p. 18.

- D. whereas on November 11, Raman Bandarenka and several other peaceful protesters were severely beaten by plain clothed security officers; Raman Bandarenka was subsequently hospitalised, but died of his injuries; whereas the regime detained the medical worker who allegedly leaked the medical report that contradicts regime's narration about causes of Bandarenka's death and a journalist who published it;
- E. whereas authorities respond to peaceful protests with disproportionate brutal force, and the heavy use of tear gas, batons, flash grenades, stun grenades and water cannons;
- F. whereas protesters face criminal prosecution and sentences on minor and often made - up charges; whereas the repressions extend beyond those who take part in the protests, including companies supporting demonstrators, journalists and others;
- G. whereas on November 19, the EU extended its sanctions to more senior officials and also entities that finance Lukashenko and his government; whereas Lukashenko and his son were added to the sanctions list on 6 November;
- H. Whereas Belarus announced decision to withdraw from Human Rights Dialogue with the EU;
- I. Whereas the authorities launched criminal case against Volha Vialichka, the director of children hospice in Grodno, and are trying to close the hospice, which would lead to leaving 70 terminally - ill children without medical support;
- J. whereas the KGB in Belairs have included Stsyapan Putsila, the founder of NEXTA TG channel, and Raman Pratasevich, former deputy editor of the channel, in the "List of organizations and individuals involved in terrorist activities";
1. Condemns in strongest possible terms the ongoing human rights violations and brutality of the Belarussian authorities against peaceful protesters; reiterates its full support to the Belarussians demonstrating on the streets, expressed by awarding 2020 Sakharov Prize to democratic opposition in Belarus;
 2. Expresses its condolences to the family of Roman Bandarenka and other victims of brutal regime, including Alyaksandr Taraykouski, Henadz Shutau, Mikita Kryutsou, Alyaksandr Vikhor, Kanstantsin Shyshmakou, Artsyom Parukou; notes that two athletes who belong to Lukashenka's coterie have been identified on photos and videos as the masked persons who brutally attacked Raman;
 3. strongly believes that impartial trials in the country are impossible while Lukashenko is still in power; is of the opinion, that while Belarus is not party to the Council of Europe and Rome Statute, impunity for mass tortures and killings in the immediate neighbourhood of the EU needs a strong reactions and therefore calls on the EU and Members States to trigger the International Criminal Court's jurisdiction via a referral by the UN bodies and reminds that individual countries may investigate specific atrocities in Belarus under the universal jurisdiction principle;
 4. Urges Belarussian authorities to cease all forms of ill-treatment and torture against detained protesters, to enable them to access medical and legal advice, and to immediately and unconditionally release those detained on political grounds;

5. Acknowledges exceptional determination and steadfastness of Belarusian society, including women, students, pensioners and the families of political prisoners or detained and tortured protesters, for their weekly women solidarity marches, which each week are met with an increasingly aggressive response from the state apparatus;
6. stands with those who remain detained and unaccounted for, those who have been killed, and those who continue to peacefully assert their right to choose their leaders in free and fair elections and calls on the EU and Member States to increase assistance to the Belarussian society, while asserting pressure on the brutal regime and its supporters;
7. Denies recognition of the results of the elections held in Belarus on 9 August 2020 and Alexander Lukashenko as a legitimate leader and president of Belarus; accordingly, calls on him to respect the decision of the people of Belarus and peacefully step down;
8. Asks the EU Institutions and Member States to provide active and direct support to Belarusian non-governmental organisations and communities, grant all necessary assistance to Belarusian citizens and human right defenders and halt any financial or other support to the state institutions of Belarus; moreover to strengthen the support programs for civil society, NGOs, journalists, European scholarship program for Belarusians, loans for specific reform programs, unlocking partnership priorities and full cooperation within the Eastern Partnership;
9. Calls on the HR/VP to include on the individual sanctions lists the officials, investigators and employees of law enforcement agencies personally responsible for persecuting the children's hospice in Hrodna, children at the hospice, as well as the director of the hospice Volha Vyalichka; asks the EU institutions to provide direct financial support for the hospice;
10. calls for further decisive sanctions to regime-linked Belarusian firms and pro-Lukashenko oligarchs, many of which operate in the territories of Member States; expects that relevant institutions will reveal to the public all assets of the regime and people connected to the inner circle of Lukashenko and support him;
11. calls on the EU and Members States to downgrade diplomatic relations with Belarus and limit them to technical level;
12. calls on The European Investment Bank (EIB) and European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) to review existing loan programmes and adjust the new ones to EU's policy towards Lukashenko's regime;
13. Deplores the involvement and support of the Russian Federation to Lukashenko regime and condemns continuing Kremlin's hybrid war against the Belarus people;
14. Instructs its President to forward this recommendation to the Council, the Commission and the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the authorities of the Republic of Belarus.