

ORAL QUESTION H-1007/06
for Question Time at the part-session in December 2006
pursuant to Rule 109 of the Rules of Procedure
by Inese Vaidere
to the Commission

Subject: The situation of democracy, human rights and freedom of expression in Russia

The situation in relation to democracy, human rights and the rule of law, as well as freedom of speech, continues to deteriorate in Russia. Parliament has on numerous occasions expressed its concern in this regard, and the DROI subcommittee has frequently received reports of specific cases of blatant violations of human rights, freedom of the press, and an almost complete lack of regard for the rule of law in Russia.

The current EU - Russia Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) will expire at the end of 2007. Parliament has repeatedly called on the Commission to take a principled and more consistent stand in its negotiations on a new PCA, so as to accord democracy, human rights and freedom of expression fundamental importance in any future agreement, and to ensure clear mechanisms to monitor implementation.

Does the Commission have any concrete plans or intentions to influence, through the new PCA and the current negotiations, the situation regarding democracy, human rights and freedom of expression in Russia?

What specific measures will be taken, and precisely what new conditions will be imposed on Russia in the new PCA in order to achieve visible progress in the area of democracy, human rights, and freedom of speech and the press in Russia? Exactly what kind of mechanisms will be introduced to ensure efficient monitoring of Russia's compliance with her obligations?

Tabled: 15.11.2006
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