

ORAL QUESTION WITH DEBATE O-0011/07

pursuant to Rule 108 of the Rules of Procedure

by Toomas Savi, István Szent-Iványi and Paavo Väyrynen, on behalf of the ALDE Group  
to the Commission

Subject: The attack on Galina Kozlova, member of the board of the Mari national organisation  
Mari Ušem and editor of the literary magazine Ontšõko

On the evening of 25 January in the capital of the Mari Republic (Mari El) of the Russian Federation, Joškar-Olas, Galina Kozlova, the wife of Vladimir Kozlov, chair of the Mari council and a candidate for the 2006 Sakharov prize, was brutally attacked. Kozlova remains in hospital and is suffering from facial injuries as well as impaired vision.

The European Parliament adopted a resolution (P6\_TA(2005)0185) on breaches of human rights and democracy in the Mari Republic (Mari El) of the Russian Federation in the spring of 2005. According to the resolution 'journalists and correspondents of non-state mass media have been continuously and frequently assaulted, harassed and intimidated in Mari El, including the killing of three journalists in 2001 and the beating of Mr Vladimir Kozlov on 4 February 2005'. The leaders of Mari people are attacked extraordinarily often, as the beating of Vassili Petrov, president of the youth association of the Finno-Ugric people, on 26 August 2005 proves. The facts provided above prove the constant abuse of human rights and the rights of small nations in the Russian Federation.

1. What is the Commission going to do to improve the situation of human rights and minorities in Russia, especially in Mari El?
2. Why is the Commission reluctant to raise the issue during the regular EU-Russia human rights dialogue?

Tabled: 07.02.2007

Forwarded: 09.02.2007

Deadline for reply: 16.02.2007