

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

6 October 1999

B5-0146/99 }
B5-0154/99 }
B5-0164/99 }
B5-0173/99 }RC1

JOINT MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

pursuant to Rule 50 of the Rules of Procedure

by the following Members:

Sacrédeus and Grossetête, on behalf of the PPE Group
Wiersma and Schori, on behalf of the PSE Group
Haarder, on behalf of the ELDR Group
Schröder and Wuori, on behalf of the V/ALE Group
Vinci, on behalf of the GUE/NGL Group

replacing the motions by the following groups:

- ELDR Group (B5-0146/99)
- PSE Group (B5-0154/99)
- V/ALE Group (B5-0164/99)
- PPE Group (B5-0173/99)

on the situation in Belarus

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on the situation in Belarus,
 - having regard to the Council declaration of 15 September 1997,
- A. whereas, according to the 1994 Constitution, the mandate of President Lukashenko expired on 20 July 1999, and whereas no other legitimate, democratic structures have been in force since their abolition by President Lukashenko following a controversial referendum held in 1996; whereas parliamentary elections are scheduled for the year 2000,
- B. noting that opposition politicians have continuously been banned from access to the state-controlled printed and electronic media and that even access to the newest media such as the Internet is completely prohibited,

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PE 281.620/
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PE 281.647/ RC1
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- C. deeply concerned about the still unsolved cases concerning the disappearance of Victor Gonchar, deputy speaker of the Thirteenth Supreme Council, and Anatoly Krasovsky, head of the 'Kraiska' publishing house, who were last seen on 16 September, as well as that of the former head of Belarus National Bank, Tamara Vinnikova, and the former Minister of Internal Affairs, General Yuri Zakharenko,
- D. noting, furthermore, that the former Prime Minister, Mr Mikhail Chyhir, is being held in prison on the charge of abuse of office for which, however, no proof has yet been found,
- E. noting, furthermore, that some managers of enterprises were recently arrested in an apparent attempt to increase State control over those enterprises,
- F. concerned about the mounting criminalisation of journalists of the independent press, which has led inter alia to the imposition on the major independent journal "Naviny" of a fine of about USD 20 000 and to a threat of closure being made on behalf of the President himself,
- G. emphasising once again that the European Union, by way of a Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with Belarus, has sought to reinforce its relations with Belarus and to give its full support to the necessary process of economic and democratic reform in that country,
- H. emphasising that recent events and the structural unwillingness to implement democratic reform have prevented further integration of Belarus into the economic and political structures of Europe,
- I. whereas an OSCE Assistance and Monitoring Group has made constant efforts to promote the re-establishment of democratic structures and dialogue between the opposition and the government; whereas access to the state-owned media for the opposition is a central issue in the negotiations,
- J. whereas the TABIS civil society development programme put into place to strengthen the NAOS and the independent media has still to be accepted by the Belarusian Interior Minister,
 - 1. Calls upon the Belarusian authorities to do everything in their power to locate Ms Tamara Vinnikova, General Yuri Zakharenko and Mr Victor Gonchar, and to ensure their safety, and expects early results of such investigations;
 - 2. Calls upon the Belarusian authorities to immediately release all those who are in prison for exercising their right to freedom of expression, especially Mr Andry Klimov MP and Mr Vladimir Kudinov MP,
 - 3. Calls on the Belarusian authorities to restore international standards in the fields of human rights and freedom of the press and of speech, as provided by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights as well as the Paris Charter for a new Europe, to which Belarus is a signatory, and which is also the basis for the PA between Belarus and the EU,

4. Calls upon the Belarusian authorities to fulfil immediately the necessary conditions for an improvement in relations between the European Union and Belarus by taking the necessary steps in the process of economic and democratic reform and respecting international standards in the field of good governance and respect for human rights, and not to hinder the implementation of the TABIS civil society development programme; emphasises again that no further cooperation between the European Union and Belarus may be undertaken until clear steps towards respect for human rights and democratic and legal reform are taken by the Belarusian Government,
5. Gives its full support to the OSCE efforts to urge the president and the opposition to engage in dialogue so as to avoid deeper divisions,
6. Calls upon President Lukashenko to allow free and fair presidential elections in 1999 and parliamentary elections in 2000, in accordance with OSCE commitments, and to meet the necessary preconditions, such as unhindered access to the mass media for the opposition,
7. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the Council, the OSCE, the government of Belarus and the democratically elected Parliament of Belarus.