P6_TA(2005)0207 **(adopted in Plenary on 26 May 2006)**

EU-Russia Relations

European Parliament resolution on EU-Russia relations (2004/2170(INI))

The European Parliament,

– having regard to the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the Russian Federation, of the other part, which entered into force on 1 December 1997[1],

– having regard to the objective of the EU and Russia, set out in the joint statement issued after the St Petersburg Summit on 31 May 2003, to set up a common economic space, a common space of freedom, security and justice, a space of co-operation in the field of external security and a space of research and education, including cultural aspects,

– having regard to the many credible reports by Russian and international NGOs on the continuing grave violations of human rights in Chechnya, the judgments of 24 February 2005 of the European Court of Human Rights in six cases relating to Chechnya and the many such cases pending before that court,

– having regard to its recommendation of 26 February 2004 to the Council on EU-Russia relations[2], and its resolution of 15 December 2004 on the EU-Russia Summit held in The Hague on 25 November 2004[3],

– having regard to its resolution of 13 January 2005 on the results of the Ukraine elections[4],

– having regard to its resolution of 10 March 2005 on Belarus[5],

– having regard to the outcome of the 15th EU-Russia Summit on 10 May 2005,

– having regard to Rule 45 of its Rules of Procedure,

– having regard to the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the opinion of the Committee on International Trade (A6-0135/2005),

A. whereas good-neighbourly relations and cooperation between the EU and Russia are crucial for stability, security and prosperity across the whole of the European continent; whereas these relations must be based on common values, thus encompassing human rights, the market economy, the rule of law and democracy,

---

1 OJ L 327, 28.11.1997, p. 1.
2 OJ C 98 E, 23.4.2004, p. 182.
3 Texts Adopted, P6_TA(2004)0099.
4 Texts Adopted, P6_TA(2005)0009.
5 Texts Adopted, P6_TA(2005)0080.

B. whereas the EU and Russia have high ambitions for their partnership; welcoming the progress made relating to issues such as the Russian ratification of the Kyoto Protocol and the extension of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, and the Kaliningrad transit for persons and progress in negotiating the terms of Russian accession to the WTO,

C. whereas Russia emphasises the importance of multilateralism, and sees its full participation in the UN, G-8 and the Council of Europe as a cornerstone of its foreign policy,

D. whereas democracy has been weakened in Russia, in particular by the bringing of all major TV stations and most radio stations under government control, the spread of self-censorship among the print media, new restrictions on the right to organise public demonstrations, a worsening climate for NGOs, increased political control of the judiciary and changes to the way Members of the State Duma are elected, all of which are intended to strengthen the power of the Kremlin,

E. regretting that the situation in Chechnya continues to be out of control and that further extreme terrorist attacks have occurred in the North Caucasus and in Moscow, believes that there is an urgent need for a new approach, which the EU is ready to lend its support in building,

F. whereas the EU wishes to make sure that its enlargement does not create any new dividing lines in Europe, but rather helps to further spread prosperity and development; whereas the EU wishes to conduct a dialogue with Russia on issues relating to their common neighbourhood,

G. whereas full recognition is due for the enormous efforts and sacrifices of the peoples of the Soviet Union in fighting and liberating many countries and their peoples in Europe from the Nazi terror regime which has no historical comparison, but also deploring the enormous hardship and sacrifices the occupation and subsequent annexation and tyranny of the Soviet Union very often inflicted on several countries and peoples, including the Baltic States is also to be deplored; whereas it is to be hoped that Russia will fully recognise these facts as a basis for comprehensive reconciliation between Russia and all member countries of the EU,

H. whereas a coherent and objective approach by the EU and its Member States is a necessary precondition for a sound and effective policy towards Russia; whereas major flaws in the EU's policy-making procedure as regards its policy on Russia were acknowledged by the Commission and the Council at the beginning of 2004 and a new method for ensuring coherence was introduced, based on a document on key issues, each with a 'line to take'; whereas this has not resulted in sufficient improvement and some measure of public and parliamentary control must be introduced,

Policy of the EU and Member States

1. Acknowledges the importance of Russia as a partner for pragmatic cooperation with whom the Union shares not only economic and trade interests but also an objective to act in the international arena, as well as in the common neighbourhood, as strategic partners;

2. Acknowledges Russia's potential as a special strategic partner for providing peace, stability and security, and fighting international terrorism and violent extremism, as well as addressing 'soft security' issues such as environmental and nuclear hazards, drugs, arms and human trafficking and cross-border organised crime in the European neighbourhood in cooperation with the OSCE and other international fora;

3. Emphasises the need to further develop and implement a common energy strategy for Europe, incorporating producers, distributors and consumers, aimed at creating a transparent and sustainable energy system, and to enhance the regional diversity of energy supplies; notes that the development of such a strategy is of common interest to the EU and Russia;

4. Calls on the Commission and the Council to show solidarity and unity within the EU between the old and the new Member States alike in the event of Russia aiming to differentiate its approach towards them..

5. Calls on the Council to agree on reporting requirements and other arrangements for ensuring that agreed positions are always fully respected both by the EU and individual Member States in their contacts with Russia, as should also be the case with their contacts with other third countries; urges Member States in their bilateral contacts with Russia to support the common positions taken by the EU, ensuring transparency and appropriate consultation;

6. Stresses that, in the enlarged Union, and particularly in the context of the new financial frameworks and external relations instruments, the significance of regional cooperation should be given greater emphasis and, in the EU's northern regions and Russia's north-western regions, the Northern Dimension should provide the framework for this regional cooperation;

Four common spaces

7. Supports the objective of setting up the four common policy spaces and the preparation of a road map for each of them; insists that the four spaces have to be seen as a package, and that higher priority must be given to quality than to speed; draws attention to the need not only for agreed wording, but also for real convergence on key sensitive issues;

8. Welcomes in particular the intention of the European Union and Russia to cooperate in future in resolving regional conflicts, such as those in Transnistria, Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Nagorno-Karabakh, and stresses that it is now for Russia to respond positively to the European Union's readiness to contribute at a humanitarian and political level to stabilisation of the situation in the Chechen conflict;

9. Expects the Council and the Commission, but also Russia, to seize the momentum created by the summit and progress with concrete measures to fulfil the action plans; recommends that specific attention be paid to the following issues in the four common spaces:

   – Common Economic Space: welcomes the agreement to strengthen co-operation in the environmental field, enhance co-operation in telecoms, transport and

energy, but stresses that further progress is needed on competition and that investment conditions need to be improved with increased foreseeability and legal certainty;

– Common Space of Freedom, Security and Justice: stresses that progress in this Space cannot be restricted to re-admission and visa facilitation, but must include action strengthening democracy, the rule of law and the independence of the media; stresses that human rights consultations must become a permanent feature in the EU-Russia partnership;

– Common Space of External Security: expects concrete action of the following renewed commitment to resolving the frozen conflicts in the Caucasus and in Transnistria, and increased dialogue on crisis management and security;

– Common Space on Research, Education and Culture: welcomes the decision setting up the European institute in Moscow in 2006 as a concrete step towards increased co-operation in this field;

10. Stresses that conclusion of a readmission agreement is a prerequisite for the signing of the EU-Russia visa facilitation agreement; believes that the EU should welcome the Russian objective of an eased visa regime with the Schengen area, with visa-free travel as a long-term goal, and set out all necessary conditions in a clear action plan listing concrete measures;

11. Supports Russia's ambition to accede to the WTO and sees a common interest in supporting Russia to become a partner with an open, dynamic and diversified economy; stresses the need to strengthen the independence and transparency of the judiciary in order to improve the investment climate;

12. Notes that WTO membership will send an important signal to foreign investors, thereby helping to strengthen and diversify trade links;

13. Calls on the Commission to continue and strengthen dialogue with the Russian authorities and with economic partners on issues of trade and economic co-operation, covering in particular technical regulations and the standardisation of customs procedures, the liberalisation of services, the abolition of monopolies and the opening-up of the banking system, and to ensure that Russia puts in place intellectual property enforcement measures resulting in a substantial reduction in piracy of intellectual property rights prior to Russia's accession to the WTO;

14. Encourages the Russian government to apply a system for setting the prices of energy resources (gas) that complies with WTO requirements and to put an end to the policy of discrimination in relation to rail tariffs which favours Russian ports over non-Russian ports in the Baltic, which is contrary to the principles of the market economy and is adversely affecting trade between the European Union and Russia;

15. Calls on the EU and Russia to develop deeper integration by preparing and starting negotiations on a Free Trade Area immediately after Russia's accession to the WTO; considers that the EU-Russia Free Trade Area agreement will be an ambitious stage in the formation of the Common Economic Space, covering trade in goods and services,

freedom of establishment, rules on government procurement, regulatory compatibility and other trade aspects;

16. Welcomes the current negotiations to extend cooperation between the European Galileo Programme and the Russian satellite navigation system Glonass, and encourages both sides to conclude an agreement on compatibility and complementary use of the two navigation systems;

Democracy, human rights and the rule of law in Russia

17. Expresses its concern about the apparent weakening of Russia's commitment to democracy, market economy and protection of human rights; regrets restrictions on the operation of free and independent media; reiterates its criticism of the use of the judicial system in the apparent pursuit of political goals; notes that these developments affect both the situation of the Russian people and Russia's foreign relations, and that as long as they are not reversed, development of the EU-Russia partnership will be more difficult;

18. Takes the view, in this respect, that the Yukos case represents a fundamental test of Russia's respect for the rule of law, property rights, transparency and a fair and open market for investors;

19. Takes note of the regular consultations on human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities, recently launched by the EU and Russia; stresses, in this regard, that such consultation must comply with the EU guidelines on human rights dialogues and should therefore include in its process the involvement of the EP and non-governmental organisations so as to identify the major concerns to be raised;

20. Stresses that all States should fully respect their national and international commitments in the field of minority rights; is concerned about reports of discrimination against certain ethnic groups, for example the Mari people;

21. Notes with concern manifestations of anti-semitism in Russia;

Neighbourhood and foreign policy

22. Rejects foreign policies aimed at creating spheres of influence; stresses the need to fully respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States, including the right of every State to seek to develop its relations with other States and organisations based on its own definition of its interests and in accordance with principles laid down within the framework of the UN, OSCE and Council of Europe;

23. Asks Russia to see the spread of democracy in its neighbourhood and the development of stronger ties with the EU, including membership, not as a danger to Russia's position, but as a chance to renew political and economic cooperation with those countries on a basis of equality and mutual respect;

24. Calls on Russia and all EU Member States to fully open all their World War II secret files and make them available to historians for mutual study and confidence-building;

25. Calls on Russia to resolve the stalemate in relations with the OSCE by fulfilling its obligations regarding contributions to the OSCE budget; notes that the absence of a budget hinders OSCE operations, resulting in a deadlock in democratisation and security enhancement in Central and Eastern Europe; supports further development of OSCE activities in the field of security and regrets that the absence of Russian support made it impossible to continue the border monitoring mission in Georgia; regrets, in this respect, the Council's decision not to provide some form of replacement for such a mission; also supports further exploration of possibilities to strengthen OSCE promotion of cooperation on economic and environmental matters, as called for by Russia; is, however, firmly opposed to any weakening of OSCE election monitoring and other 'human dimension' activities which constitute concrete expressions of the common values upon which the EU-Russia partnership is based;

26. Stresses the importance of setting up the common space of external security, which in time could lead to the creation of a specific high-level forum for EU-Russia dialogue on security, conflict prevention and conflict resolution, non-proliferation and disarmament; supports Russian participation in EU-led crisis management under the conditions defined by the European Council in Seville in June 2002[1], provided that Russian forces demonstrate their capacity to adapt to EU standards and operational procedures and more generally to the developing European security and defence culture;

27. Stresses the importance of pursuing a peaceful and political resolution of any territorial and political conflicts concerning a part of the Russian Federation or a neighbouring state, including the conflicts in the Caucasus region and the Transdnistria conflict in Moldova; calls on Russia to respect all peaceful reform movements in CIS states and to encourage democratic reforms in the Central Asian states;

28. Calls on Russia to reaffirm its commitment to the territorial integrity of Georgia and Moldova and to withdraw its military forces from Georgia and Moldova in accordance with its OSCE commitments, as well as with the request of these sovereign states;

29. Is convinced that successful reforms in Ukraine, in conjunction with the newly won democracy, improve the prospects of economic, social and moral benefits both for Russia and the EU; calls on the Council and the Commission to make every effort to facilitate the reaping of such benefits;

30. Urges the Council to raise with Russia the question of Belarus, pointing out that the democratisation of that country is in the interests of both the EU and the Russian Federation and that joint action should be taken to that end;

31. Underlines the importance of the innovative cross-border component of the proposed European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument, which is intended to replace the TACIS programme in Russia and other countries; stresses the importance of promoting

---

[1] 'Arrangement on consultation and cooperation between the EU and Russia on crisis management' - Annex IV to Presidency Report on European Security and Defence Policy (10160/2/02 REV2), mentioned in Annex VIII to the Presidency Conclusions of the Seville European Council 21-22 June 2002

cross-border economic and social links and the need to considerably strengthen EU action to this effect;

32. Underlines the importance of multilateralism, and cooperation between the EU and Russia in support of the authority of the UN and to co-ordinate positions on UN reform, in particular as regards the Security Council; underlines the importance of Russia's support for the International Criminal Court and the Kyoto Protocol;

33. Notes that the fight against terrorism has brought the issue of weapons of mass destruction proliferation and the safety of nuclear arsenal to the top of the list of global security concerns; calls on Russia to work on non-proliferation and disarmament globally, including Iran, and act especially through disavowing the development of new types of nuclear weapons, the safe disposal of nuclear waste and the steady and verified dismantling of its nuclear arsenal; calls on the Commission and the Council to offer Russia substantial technical and material assistance to help it with this dismantling; calls on the Council and the Member States - in a spirit of "effective multilateralism" and solidarity and in pursuit of the EU strategy against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction - to develop and support new initiatives on nuclear disarmament and the revitalisation of the UN Conference on Disarmament;

34. Acknowledges the critical importance of Russia in establishing potentially extremely important transport corridors linking Europe with Asia, and encourages the Russian Federation towards close cooperation in transport infrastructure development;

35. Calls on Russia to stop using its state-controlled companies operating in the energy field as a tool of political pressure on neighbouring countries;

Specific issues in relation to the Baltic States

36. Reiterates its call for Russia to ratify the recently concluded border agreement with Estonia, and to sign and ratify the border agreement with Latvia without further delay; considers the final demarcation of all the borders Russia shares with new EU Member States and the conclusion of a readmission agreement to be prerequisites for the signing of the EU-Russia visa facilitation agreement, and believes that, once all necessary conditions set by the EU in a clear action plan listing concrete measures are met by Russia, the EU should welcome the Russian objective of an eased visa-regime with the Schengen area, with visa-free travel as a long-term goal;

37. Suggests that Russia delete from its existing social security legislation the reference to the Baltic States as an area where the Russian military may, even now, be deployed and harmed in armed action;

Kaliningrad

38. Welcomes the progress made in solving the problems of transit and the movement of persons between the constituent parts of Russia; notes the need for increased Russian efforts and EU support to stimulate social and economic development in the Kaliningrad region as a model for the further relationship, and paying special attention to health issues (including the spread of HIV/AIDS), the fight against corruption and criminality;

stresses the need for the full implementation of freedom of navigation in the Baltic Sea, including the Vistula Lagoon and Kaliningradzkij Zaliv and free passage through the Pilava Strait/Baltijskij Proliv;

Chechnya

39. Condemns the killing of Mr Maskhadov, the last president of the Republic of Chechnya with a real popular mandate; calls on all sides to end the violence;

40. Considers that it is imperative to arrive at a political solution which involves all the democratic components of Chechen society and guarantees to all people residing in or returning to Chechnya inter alia a real right to life, freedom and security and to the Chechen people respect for their cultural and national identity and dignity; at the same time, this solution should respect the territorial integrity of the Russian Federation and be fully compatible with the pursuit, by legitimate and effective means, of stability and security throughout the North Caucasus and the entire Russian Federation;

41. Is deeply concerned about the continuing failure to end lawlessness in Chechnya, including within the ranks of federal and local government forces; calls for an immediate end to impunity and violence on both sides and for a political solution and respect for the territorial integrity of Russia;

42. Recalls its recommendations to the Council regarding Chechnya in paragraph 14 of its resolution of 26 February 2004, including on the need to more actively pursue a political solution and on EU readiness to give assistance to a peaceful and constructive dialogue; deplores that the Council has not acted on these recommendations, believes that they remain valid and calls on the Council to take action;

43. Is deeply concerned by the fact that human rights defenders investigating and speaking out about human rights violations are increasingly facing attacks on their freedom and security in the context of the armed conflict in Chechnya; urges the Russian authorities to put an end to this harassment; calls, in this regard, on the Council to pay particular attention to the protection of these people in compliance with the EU Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders adopted in June 2004 and to put the matter at the top of the agenda of the EU-Russia Consultation on Human Rights;

44. Calls on Russia to protect human rights defenders, who are increasingly coming under attack, and to grant access to Chechnya to UN special rapporteurs and other international human rights monitors, independent media and international humanitarian organisations, providing where possible all the necessary security conditions for carrying out their work;

45. Reiterates its condemnation of all terrorist acts; expresses its belief that terrorism has deep roots in the socio-economic situation in the North Caucasus, as recognised by President Putin after the Beslan tragedy; declares itself willing, as one of the two arms of the budgetary authority, to consider proposals for EU involvement in reconstruction and peace-building efforts, if in the future such efforts can be launched as part of a package of measures for peace in Chechnya, with reasonable guarantees that the assistance will reach its intended beneficiaries;

Fight against terrorism

46. Stresses that international co-operation to combat terrorism must become more effective and that diverging views on the root causes of terrorism and on who should be regarded as a terrorist are impediments to that co-operation; stresses once more that this fight cannot be pursued at the expense of human rights and civil liberties;

Environment and nuclear safety

47. Calls for further cooperation in the field of maritime safety, notably concerning a ban for all single-hull tankers entering Russian waters in the Baltic and Black Seas; calls for the conclusion of an agreement between the "LUKOIL" company controlled by the Russian Government and the Lithuanian Government on guarantees of compensation in case of environmental catastropheat the D-6 oil drilling facility near the Curonian Spit, which is a UNESCO World Cultural Heritage site;

48. Calls on Russia to phase out its first generation nuclear reactors and intensify efforts to ensure the safe disposal of nuclear waste; underlines the importance of Russia's willingness to cooperate within the Northern Dimension Environmental Partnership Support Fund;

49. Reiterates its support for the opening of the EU market to Russian electricity exports, on condition that relevant Russian safety standards, in particular in relation to nuclear power plants and the safe processing and disposal of nuclear waste, are brought up to EU level, so that the risk of environmental dumping is avoided;

50. Welcomes the ratification of the Kyoto Protocol by the Russian Duma in October 2004 and hopes that the remaining large emitters of CO_2 follow its example; calls for joint EU-Russia explorations of future strategies to achieve further greenhouse gas emission reductions for the period after the expiry of the Protocol in 2012, in the spirit of the conclusions of the EU Spring European Council 2005;

51. Calls on the Commission and the Council to renew their efforts to draft a truly Common Strategy in their relations towards Russia, which takes account of the EU's enlargement in 2004, includes the four spheres of common interest and addresses concerns over developments in Russia regarding democracy and the protection of human rights; calls on the Council to do so in the spirit of the previous Common Strategy of the European Union on Russia;

°

° °

52. Instructs its President to transmit this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the Governments and Parliaments of the Member States and of Russia.