

Resolution on the murder of the Russian opposition leader Boris Nemtsov and the state of democracy in Russia

2015/2592(RSP) - 12/03/2015 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on the murder of the Russian opposition leader Boris Nemtsov and the state of democracy in Russia, who was murdered near the Kremlin two days before a demonstration scheduled for 1 March 2015, which he was organising, against the effects of the economic crisis and the conflict in Ukraine.

The resolution was tabled by the Greens/ALE, ALDE, ECR, S&D, and EPP groups.

Parliament strongly condemned the killing of Boris Nemtsov in the most significant political assassination in recent Russian history, and condemned, too, the Russian leadership's decision to prevent some EU diplomats and national delegations from attending his funeral, thereby impeding the EU's attempt to pay tribute to brave Russian citizens standing for universal values.

at the same time, it pointed out that Nemtsov's killing was one of a growing number of unresolved politically motivated murders and suspicious deaths perpetrated in Russia since 1998. It wanted to see an independent international investigation into the murder; taking the view that the instruments available within the framework of the OSCE, the Council of Europe and the United Nations would help to ensure an impartial and fair investigation.

EU strategy: Members considered that it was in the EU's and Russia's strategic interest to swiftly de-escalate and restore relations through diplomacy and mediation, and expressed support for democratic forces in Russia. The Council was urged to develop a **unified policy towards Russia** that committed the 28 EU Member States and the EU institutions to a strong common message concerning the role of human rights in the EU-Russia relationship and the need to end the crackdown on freedom of expression, assembly and association in Russia. An **EU strategy** should be aimed at getting Russia to fully respect the OSCE principles and at motivating Russia's leadership to move it out of its political and economic self-isolation.

The VP/HR was asked develop a **stronger programme of support for Russian civil society** in Russia and occupied Crimea, with regard to the ongoing programming phase of the EU financial instruments, Parliament called on **the EU to increase its financial assistance** to Russian civil society through the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights and the funding for civil society organisations and local authorities, and to include the EU-Russia Civil Society Forum in the Partnership Instrument with a view to ensuring sustainable and credible long-term support.

Russian propaganda and intimidation: Members called on the authorities of the Russian Federation to stop the shameful propaganda and information war against its neighbours, the Western world and its own people, which was turning Russia into a **state characterised by repression, hate speech and fear**, where nationalist euphoria was built on the annexation of Crimea and an escalating war in Ukraine. It deplored the fact that recent developments showed that Russia had moved in a direction contrary to that of a functioning democracy, which included respect for the opposition, the rule of law and the independence of the judiciary.

The Russian authorities were urged to stop all pressure, repressive acts and intimidation – both political and judicial – against opposition leaders, civil society representatives and independent media, allowing them to act freely in line with the basic principles of the Russian constitution.

Lastly, Parliament reiterated its concern regarding the Russian authorities' failure to cooperate with the **international investigation into the shooting-down of flight MH17**, underlining the fact that the amnesty arrangement made under the Minsk Agreement could not be applied to the perpetrators of this crime, who were not entitled to any amnesty.