Resolution on the situation in Belarus

2015/2834(RSP) - 10/09/2015 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on the situation in Belarus.

The text adopted in plenary was tabled by the EPP, S&D, ECR, ALDE, Greens/EFA and EFDD groups.

Parliament remains deeply **concerned by the human rights and fundamental freedoms situation in Belarus**, as well as by the shortcomings observed during previous elections by independent international observers and the active persecution of the opposition leaders after the elections.

Whilst welcoming the recent release of the remaining political prisoners, Parliament called on the Belarusian Government to **rehabilitate the released political prisoners** and to fully restore their civil and political rights. They also drew attention to the situation of **national minorities** in the country and their cultural organisations, whose leaders have at times been replaced by those preferred by the state authorities, thus violating one of the basic human freedoms: freedom of association.

The Belarusian authorities have been called upon to:

- **conduct the upcoming presidential elections** in accordance with internationally recognised standards, to give the opposition unfettered access to all government-controlled means of communication and to allow it to participate in the elections on an equal footing;
- stop the **harassment of independent media** for political reasons;
- join a **global moratorium on the execution of the death penalty** as a first step towards its permanent abolition;
- respect the recommendations of the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights on the **abolition of elements of forced labour** in the country;
- ensure, in all circumstances, **respect for democratic principles, human rights and fundamental freedoms**, in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the international and regional human rights instruments ratified by Belarus.

Members noted the holding of the **sixth round of consultations between the EU and Belarus on modernisation issues** in Brussels on 3 September 2015, when the delegations discussed the prospects for cooperation in key areas. The EEAS and the Council are urged to ensure that any participation by the authorities in the Dialogue on Modernisation, alongside and on an equal basis with the democratic opposition and civil society, takes place with full respect for democratic principles.

Parliament **supported the Commission in its policy of 'critical engagement'** with the Belarusian authorities and expressed its readiness to contribute to it also via Parliament's Delegation for relations with Belarus. It called on the Commission to support, with financial and political means, **the efforts of Belarusian civil society**, independent media and non-governmental organisations in Belarus to support the democratic aspirations of the Belarusian people.