Resolution on the forthcoming presidential elections in Ukraine

2004/2594(RSP) - 28/10/2004 - Text adopted by Parliament, topical subjects

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on the forthcoming presidential elections in Ukraine will take place on 31 October 2004 with a possible second round taking place on 21 November 2004.

The resolution had been tabled by the PES, EPP-ED, GUE/NGL, Greens/ALE, UEN and ALDE groups.

It underlines the importance of a further reinforced relationship between the EU and Ukraine and confirms the need to work together to contribute to increased stability, security and prosperity on the European continent, and to avoid the emergence of new dividing lines. Parliament stresses that the forthcoming elections and, in particular, observance of international standards for democratic rules during the electoral process are of the greatest importance for the further development of relations between Ukraine and the EU.

The resolution strongly calls upon the Council and the Commission to make full use of their resources to ensure that all necessary conditions for holding free and fair elections in Ukraine are met, and stresses the need to seriously re-examine the bilateral relationship in the event of the election indeed being tainted by significant fraud. It calls on the Commission to include measures aimed at strengthening Ukrainian civil society in the Neighbourhood Policy action plan, which is currently being prepared, and which should include proposals aimed at encouraging the political and institutional reforms which will enable Ukraine to integrate progressively in EU policies and programmes.

Parliament notes the requirements for genuinely free and fair elections and expresses its deep disappointment at the conduct to date of Ukraine's presidential election campaign and urges the Government of Ukraine to meet its commitments in this respect as enshrined by the Council of Europe and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). It cites the fact that national and international observers have noted many cases of involvement of the State administration in favour of the incumbent Prime Minister, Mr Yanukovych, and against his main challenger, Mr Yushchenko. Efforts by State officials and State bodies to impose obstacles to free assembly, free speech and free and fair political campaigning have taken place in several constituencies in Ukraine without condemnation or remedial action by the Ukrainian Government. In addition Members note that there are serious allegations that the Government of Ukraine has used broadcasting media as well as administrative State and regional resources, including personnel, to bolster the campaign of one presidential candidate, seriously compromising the political neutrality of the civil service and contravening Ukrainian law. Parliament urges the Ukrainian authorities to put an end to the ongoing violations of democratic procedures, to permit voters to make their choices freely and to ensure the freedom of candidates, members of opposition parties and independent media organisations from intimidation or harassment by government officials at all levels.

It strongly condemns the Ukrainian secret service’s terrorism investigation against the pro-opposition student group Pora, where several of Pora members have been arrested.

Lastly, Parliament pledges its continuing support and assistance to the Ukrainian people's establishment of a free and open democratic system, their creation of a prosperous market economy and their country's assumption of its rightful place in the European community of democratic nations.