Resolution on the European Union/Russia Summit held in The Hague on 25 Novembre 2004

2004/2614(RSP) - 15/12/2004 - Text adopted by Parliament, topical subjects

In a resolution adopted by 547 votes in favour, 30 against and 10 abstentions, the European Parliament adopted a resolution regretting the lack of substantial progress on the establishment of the four common areas during the 14th EU-Russia Summit in The Hague. The areas relate to freedom, security and justice, external security and education and culture. Parliament noted, however, the ambition to deepen the dialogue on a variety of issues such as minorities, human rights and fundamental rights and hoped that this dialogue will lead to concrete results.

Parliament strongly condemned the recent terrorist attacks against the civilian population in Russia and other neighbouring countries, and welcomed measures to increase EU-Russia counterterrorism cooperation measures as long as these measures fully respect human rights and fundamental freedoms and do not lead to an erosion of democratic rights or civil society.

It welcomed the ratification of the Kyoto Protocol to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change by the Duma on 22 October 2004 and stressed the positive impact that signing up to the Kyoto Protocol will have in enhancing the long-term strategic partnership between the EU and Russia.

Parliament went on to approve President Putin's announcement at the Summit that Russia will sign 'in the near future' the border agreements with Estonia and Latvia. It recognised that Russia has a special interest in maintaining good relations with many of its neighbouring countries such as Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova or those in the South Caucasus. However, Russia should adhere to the principle of noninterference in the internal affairs of sovereign states, in particular in the case of elections.

Parliament expressed its concern about the path of the democratisation process in Russia and the further accumulation of powers by the central government in Moscow, such as the appointment of supreme court judges, governors and mayors of large towns by the President of Russia. It also expressed its concern at stricter media control and restrictions on the freedom of press.

There are serious concerns about the persistent and recurring mass violations of humanitarian law and human rights committed against the civilian population of Chechnya by Russian forces. Parliament called on Russia to strive for a credible peace and reconciliation process, and reiterated that there can only be an inclusive, negotiated, political solution and not a military solution.

Parliament underlined the fact that the development of the Kaliningrad region is an important factor for the overall development of the Baltic Sea area and therefore encourages Russia and other parties concerned to promote the social and economic development of the region through its openness and economic integration. It deplored President Putin's announcement that Russia is developing new nuclear weapons.

Finally, Parliament expressed its concern about signs of strains within the EU-Russia relationship due to recent events, particularly in Ukraine.