

Resolution on Chechnya after the elections and civil society in Russia

2005/2649(RSP) - 19/01/2006 - Text adopted by Parliament, topical subjects

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on Chechnya after the elections and civil society in Russia.

The text adopted in plenary was tabled by EPP-ED, PES, Greens/ALE, GUE/NGL, UEN and ALDE groups.

Parliament reiterates its strong condemnation of all acts of terrorism throughout the Russian Federation, for which there can be no justification. It remains deeply concerned that the Council and Commission have failed to address the ongoing serious human rights violations in the Chechen Republic despite the fact that those violations are still occurring on a large scale on both sides of the conflict and in a climate of almost complete impunity. The Council and Commission are urged to confront their responsibilities in the face of the most serious human rights issues in the immediate neighbourhood of the EU and to take an active role in preventing further human rights violations and in overcoming the climate of impunity. They must insist to the Russian authorities that the necessary measures must be taken to ensure that the rights guaranteed by the European Convention on Human Rights, to which Russia is a signatory, are fully respected in the Chechen Republic and that all those who violate those rights are brought to justice regardless of their position or nationality. Parliament also reaffirms its full support for the territorial integrity of the Russian Federation, but points out that there **cannot be a military solution to the conflict in Chechnya** and calls for the start of a real peace process geared to bringing about a negotiated political settlement which is based on dialogue between all the democratic components of Chechen society.

Parliament calls on the Council and the Member States to consistently raise the issue of Chechnya at their political meetings, in the human rights dialogue and at other meetings with the Russian Federation in order to ensure that this area does not escape international attention and concern.

In order to find a peaceful solution to the conflict, Parliament stresses that the EU must speak with one voice and stick to agreed CFSP positions on Russia.

Parliament stresses that special emphasis must be placed on investigations into crimes against human rights activists, lawyers, prosecutors, judges and applicants to the European Court of Human Rights and their family members. It calls on the Member States to promote, in conformity with international law and on the basis of existing precedents, and with Russian consent, the setting-up of a mixed ad hoc international tribunal for Chechnya to try perpetrators of war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in the Chechen Republic if the climate of impunity continues to prevail.

Parliament stresses that both the democratic process and the fight against impunity in the Chechen Republic will benefit from the work of strong and independent human rights organisations, and calls on Russia to grant independent media, international and domestic humanitarian organisations and human rights monitors full access to Chechnya and to assist as far as possible in securing them safe working conditions. It regrets that the bill strengthening government control over NGOs in Russia was passed.

Lastly, Parliament calls, in this regard, on the Council and Commission to make every effort to support the development and consolidation of a strong, lively, independent and genuine civil society in Russia as a fundamental and indispensable element of a functioning democracy.