

P6_TA(2007)0528

EU-Russia Summit

European Parliament resolution of 14 November 2007 on the EU-Russia Summit

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the Russian Federation, of the other part¹, which entered into force in 1997 and expires in 2007,
 - having regard to the objective of the EU and Russia, set out in the joint statement issued following the 11th EU-Russia Summit, held on 31 May 2003 in St Petersburg, to set up a common economic space, a common space of freedom, security and justice, a common space of cooperation in the field of external security and a common space of research and education, including cultural aspects,
 - having regard to the outcome of the 20th EU-Russia Summit, which took place on 26 October 2007 in Mafra, Portugal,
 - having regard to the EU-Russia human rights consultations,
 - having regard to its previous resolutions on EU relations with Russia, in particular its resolution of 10 May 2007 on the EU-Russia Summit to be held in Samara on 18 May 2007² and its resolution of 19 June 2007 on EU economic and trade relations with Russia³,
 - having regard to Rule 103(4) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas enhanced cooperation and good-neighbourly relations between the EU and Russia are of key importance to the stability, security and prosperity of the whole of Europe,
- B. whereas the Russian Federation is a full member of the Council of Europe and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and has therefore committed itself to the principles of democracy and democratic elections laid down by these organisations,
- C. whereas there is serious concern about the developments in the Russian Federation with regard to respect for and protection of human rights and to respect for commonly agreed democratic principles, rules and procedures, in particular with a view to the upcoming elections to the State Duma (2 December 2007) and to the office of President of the Russian Federation (March 2008),
- D. whereas the forthcoming Duma and presidential elections are therefore of crucial importance for the development of democracy and the rule of law in Russia,

¹ OJ L 327, 28.11.1997, p. 1.

² *Texts Adopted*, P6_TA(2007)0178.

³ *Texts Adopted*, P6_TA(2007)0262.

- E. whereas in recent months Russia has waged an increasingly vocal campaign against OSCE election observers, accusing them of bias and of focusing almost exclusively on elections 'east of Vienna'; whereas Russia's diplomatic delegation to the OSCE's headquarters in Vienna last month circulated proposals to limit missions by the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) to 50 people and bar them from making public assessments immediately after elections; whereas, according to Vladimir Churov, head of the Central Electoral Commission, Russia will invite '300 to 400 foreign observers' to the 2 December 2007 election – a fraction of the 1 165 present at the last parliamentary poll in March 2003,
- F. whereas the conclusion of a Strategic Partnership Agreement between the EU and the Russian Federation remains of the utmost importance for the further development and intensification of cooperation between the two partners,
- G. whereas the start of the negotiations on the new PCA has been delayed and made conditional upon the Russian Government lifting a ban on Polish agricultural imports introduced in 2005; whereas efforts are being made by the EU and Russia to find a compromise on the Polish imports issue, in order to end this political impasse, and on the shutting down of the 'Druzhba' pipeline to Lithuania, which appeared to be politically motivated,
- H. whereas there was a clear Russian commitment at the EU-Russia Summit held in Samara on 18 May 2007 to sign the agreement on Siberian overflights; whereas the prospects of this happening in the near future seem to be very slim; whereas problems have recently occurred in connection with the rights of Lufthansa Cargo to fly over Russian territory on routes from Europe to South-East Asia,
- I. whereas the rapid accession of the Russian Federation to the WTO would make a substantial contribution to the further improvement of economic relations between Russia and the EU, subject to full compliance with and implementation of WTO commitments and obligations,
- J. whereas the rapid implementation of the four Common Spaces, with a Common Economic Space (CES), a Common Space of Freedom, Security and Justice, a Common Space of External Security and a Common Space of Research, Education and Culture, should be at the heart of the negotiations on the new Strategic Partnership Agreement,
- K. whereas recently Russia has included some of the EU's largest energy companies in a strategic partnership role in several major energy projects or has allowed EU companies to buy strategic stakes in Russian companies; noting, however, that the dismantling of Yukos and the auctioning-off of its assets do not provide for a transparent business environment; noting, further, the recent decision of 13 August 2007 of the Swiss Federal Tribunal, which ruled that the Russian authorities' prosecution of Mikhail Khodorkovsky and Yukos was illegal and politically motivated,
- L. whereas security of energy supply is one of the biggest challenges for Europe and one of the major areas of cooperation with Russia, and whereas joint efforts are needed to make full and efficient use of energy transport systems, both those already existing and those to be further developed,
- M. whereas disputes about the conditions of supply and transport of energy should be solved

in a negotiated, non-discriminatory and transparent way and must never be used as a means of exerting political pressure on the EU Member States and on the countries in the common neighbourhood,

- N. whereas a future agreement between the European Union and the Russian Federation should therefore include the principles of the Energy Charter Treaty,
- O. whereas the European Union and the Russian Federation could and should play an active role together in establishing peace and stability on the European continent, in particular in the common neighbourhood, and in other parts of the world, including Iran and the Middle East; whereas new tensions have arisen in Abkhazia and South Ossetia and no progress has been made towards resolving the other 'frozen conflicts' such as in Transnistria,
- P. whereas absolute priority should be given by both partners to finding a solution to the issue of the future status of Kosovo which can be accepted by both parties involved in the conflict,
- Q. whereas declarations made by the Russian authorities in reaction to the US plans to establish parts of its missile defence system in Poland and the Czech Republic and Russia's inappropriate threat to pull out of the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE Treaty) have raised serious concerns about the preservation of peace and stability on the European continent,
- R. whereas it is important that the EU speaks with one voice, shows solidarity and displays unity in its relations with the Russian Federation, and bases those relations on mutual interests and common values,
 - 1. Reconfirms its conviction that Russia remains an important partner for the purpose of building strategic cooperation based on common values, with which the EU shares not only economic and trade interests but also the objective of cooperating closely in the international arena;
 - 2. Calls on the Russian Government to create together with the EU the necessary condition for a rapid start to the negotiations on a new PCA between the EU and Russia; stresses the importance of unity and solidarity among the EU Member States in their relations with Russia; stresses once more, in this connection, that democracy and human rights must be at the core of any future agreement with the Russian Federation;
 - 3. Welcomes in this context, in spite of the limited results achieved at the Mafra Summit, the atmosphere of the meeting and the subsequent encouraging statements that could lead to the unblocking of the situation in the near future; notes the positive dynamics in the ongoing work on the practical implementation of the road maps for the four Common Spaces, mentioned above, and stresses that further deepening of the partnership would be mutually beneficial;
 - 4. Welcomes the progress made at the Mafra Summit as regards Russia's accession to the WTO, which will create a level playing field for the business communities on both sides and greatly help Russian efforts to build a modern, diversified, high-technology economy; calls on Russia to take the necessary steps to remove the remaining obstacles to the accession process, which is at a critical stage, and to be able to comply in full with and

implement WTO membership commitments and obligations;

5. Expresses the hope that an agreement can soon be reached on the conditions for rapid accession of the Russian Federation to the WTO;
6. Notes the continuous exchange of views on human rights in Russia as part of the EU-Russia human rights consultations; emphasises, however, that the current situation in Russia gives rise to serious concern in terms of respect for human rights, democracy, freedom of expression and the rights of civil society and individuals to challenge authorities and hold them accountable for their actions; is extremely worried about the lack of any substantive response by the Russian authorities to the numerous expressions of this concern; stresses that the implementation of the current NGO law has had a negative impact on the work of many NGOs, and supports ongoing initiatives to simplify procedures for registering NGOs;
7. Emphasises that the situation in Chechnya continues to be a point of dissent in the relations between the EU and Russia; reiterates its strong criticism of Russia's policy in Chechnya and its condemnation of the numerous human rights violations in Chechnya; calls on the Russian Federation as a matter of urgency to take concrete steps to eradicate torture and other ill-treatment, arbitrary detention and 'disappearances' in the Chechen Republic, and to tackle impunity in relation to such violations;
8. Urges the Council and the Commission to call on the Russian Federation to ratify Additional Protocol 14 to the European Convention on Human Rights;
9. Calls for a stepping-up of the EU-Russia human rights dialogue and for this process to be opened up to effective input from the European Parliament, the State Duma and civil society and human rights organisations; calls for the situation of minorities within Russia to be included on the agenda of the human rights dialogue; calls on Russia to respect fully its obligations as a member of the Council of Europe, including respecting the right of association and the right of peaceful demonstration;
10. Draws attention to the difficult working conditions, pressuring and intimidation of journalists, including foreign correspondents, in the Russian Federation;
11. Expresses its concern about the restriction of democratic freedoms in the run-up to the Duma elections in December 2007 and the presidential elections in March 2008; calls on the Russian authorities to guarantee a free and fair process for both elections in order to ensure that the opposition parties have the possibility of participating in those elections and the opportunity to conduct a competitive election campaign, whilst fully respecting the principle of freedom of expression; stresses that freedom of the media will be of key importance if the elections are to be seen as free and fair; underlines the importance of NGOs independent of national governments for the development of civil society;
12. Regrets, in this regard, the Russian authorities' delay in issuing an election observation invitation to the OSCE, which will prevent a long-term mission, and their allowing only a restricted number of OSCE observers to monitor the parliamentary elections; points out that the limited number of observers deeply undermines the quality of the task to be performed and the overall credibility of the mission; urges the Russian authorities speedily to grant the international observers the necessary visas;

13. Expresses its deep concern at the diplomatic efforts by the Russian Federation to curtail the activities of the ODHIR by submitting proposals to the OSCE to cut the size of election observation missions and by prohibiting the publication of their reports immediately after an election; highlights the irreplaceable key role played by this organisation in the transition from totalitarian regimes to democratic systems; stresses that a free and fair electoral process is at the core of a genuine, fully fledged functioning democracy and that OSCE observation missions can make a decisive contribution in this direction;
14. Reiterates, moreover, the importance of setting up the above-mentioned Common Economic Space (CES) and further developing the objectives agreed on in the CES road map, especially as regards the creation of an open market between the EU and Russia;
15. Stresses the importance of improving the climate for European investment in Russia, which can only be achieved by promoting and facilitating non-discriminatory and transparent business conditions, less bureaucracy, and two-way investment; is concerned about the lack of predictability in the application of rules by the authorities;
16. Welcomes the intensified EU-Russia dialogue on energy issues; underlines the importance of energy imports for European economies, representing as they do a potential opportunity for further trade and economic cooperation between the EU and Russia; stresses that the principles of interdependence and transparency should be the basis of such cooperation, together with equal access to markets, infrastructure and investment; calls on the Council and the Commission to ensure that the principles of the Energy Charter Treaty, which, pursuant to Article 45 thereof, is binding on Russia even prior to its ratification by the Russian State Duma, the Transit Protocol annexed thereto and the G8 conclusions are incorporated in a new PCA between the EU and Russia, including further cooperation on energy efficiency, energy saving and renewable energy; points out that these principles should be applied to major energy infrastructure projects, such as the Baltic gas pipeline; calls for the EU to speak to Russia with one voice on these sensitive energy matters;
17. Calls on the Russian Federation to invest heavily in energy efficiency measures, given the urgent need to address the problem of climate change and the social benefits that such investment will bring; recalls in this connection that the flexibility mechanism provided for in the Kyoto Protocol could attract investment to modernise the Russian energy and energy end-uses sector;
18. Welcomes the strengthening of EU-Russia cooperation in space in the framework of the Tripartite Space Dialogue set up in March 2006 between the Commission, the European Space Agency and Roscosmos, encompassing space applications (satellite navigation, earth observation and satellite communications), access to space (launchers and future space transportation systems), space science and space technology development; notes that within the CES, cooperation in space has been identified as a priority sector;
19. Welcomes the signing at the Mafra Summit of an agreement on trade in certain steel products, increasing the quotas for flat steel and long steel products to take into account the enlargement of the EU to include Bulgaria and Romania and to cover deliveries to steel service centres in EU Member States;
20. Calls on both sides to find a solution to the timber export duty problem in accordance

with WTO rules;

21. Welcomes the progress achieved in terms of the implementation of cross-border cooperation programmes based on the principle of co-financing and equal status in the selection of priority projects; welcomes in particular the announcement made by the Russian side at the Mafra Summit that it is ready to allocate the necessary funds to these programmes, starting with a first tranche of EUR 122 000 000;
22. Underlines that queues of trucks up to 50 km long on the EU side of the border are unacceptable and therefore calls on Russia to streamline its procedures at the borders and to implement the measures agreed with the EU to reduce these bottlenecks;
23. Calls, therefore, on the Council and the Commission to redouble their efforts to resolve the problems in crossing EU-Russian borders, to engage in concrete projects and to make full use of the new Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument and the INTERREG funds for cross-border cooperation;
24. Regrets the fact that Russia did not honour its commitment to phase out Siberian overflight payments, calls on Russia to sign the agreement reached on this issue at the last summit and underlines that a positive move by Russia would allow the EU to go ahead with the Aviation Summit that is planned to take place in Moscow in spring 2008 to identify the enormous potential for cooperation in this key sector;
25. Appeals to the Governments of Russia and the United States to intensify the discussions on defence and security issues directly or indirectly involving the Member States of the European Union; urges the Governments of both States to involve the EU and its Member States fully in these discussions and to refrain from taking any steps or decisions which might be considered a threat to peace and stability on the European continent;
26. Urges Russia to reconsider plans to suspend compliance with the CFE Treaty () and to use the path of negotiations in order to protect its legitimate interests and avoid an erosion of the CFE Treaty, which could lead to a new arms race and new lines of confrontation;
27. Calls on the Russian Government to make a positive contribution to the efforts of the Contact Group for Kosovo and the EU to find a sustainable, political solution for the future status of Kosovo which can be accepted by the parties involved in the conflict;
28. Calls on the EU and on Russia, as a member of the UN Security Council, to continue their efforts to find a solution to the Iranian nuclear issue;
29. Welcomes the holding of the first Permanent Partnership Council on Culture; underlines the importance of people-to-people contacts; notes that the recent visa facilitation agreement between the EU and Russia has contributed to a certain extent to overcoming the existing difficulties in this area, but stresses that there is a need for more ambitious visa facilitation which also covers ordinary bona fide travellers not belonging to any pre-set categories, and for liberalisation in the long term;
30. Welcomes the initiatives to achieve visa-free travel between the EU and Russia; calls for further cooperation on illegal immigration, improved checks on identity documents and better information exchange on terrorism and organised crime; emphasises that the Council and the Commission must ensure that Russia complies with all the conditions set

in any negotiated agreement on the elimination of visas between the two sides, so as to prevent any breach of security and democracy in Europe;

31. Stresses the importance of the continued fight against corruption; welcomes the participation of the Russian Federation in the Council of Europe's Group of States against Corruption, but underlines that international conventions, national legislation and codes of conduct are not sufficient if they are not followed by effective implementation;
32. Welcomes the signing of a memorandum of understanding between Russia's Federal Drug Control Service and the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction calling for the strengthening of EU-Russia cooperation in all areas of anti-drug activities, from medical aid for drug addicts to working on preventive measures with the media and public organisations;
33. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Governments and Parliaments of the Member States and of the Russian Federation, the Council of Europe and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe.