

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2004



2009

Session document

21.5.2007

B6-0215/2007

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on statements by the Council and Commission

pursuant to Rule 103(2) of the Rules of Procedure

by Tunne Kelam, Charles Tannock, Christopher Beazley, José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra, Bogdan Klich and Anna Ibrisagic

on behalf of the PPE-DE Group

on the situation in Estonia

European Parliament resolution on the situation in Estonia

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Rule 103(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas in the capital of Estonia, between 26 and 28 April 2007, extremist groups carried out two nights of violence, which started with demonstrators attacking the police and resulted in widespread vandalism in the centre of Tallinn,
- B. whereas the pretext for the anti-government demonstrations was the Estonian Government's plan to relocate the Soviet 'monument to the liberators of Tallinn' from the centre of the Estonian capital to a military cemetery a few kilometres away,
- C. whereas the Government of Estonia explained the reasons for this decision in advance to the Government of the Russian Federation, offering to cooperate with them during the relocation of the monument and encouraging Russian representatives to attend the exhumations, which the Russian authorities refused to do,
- D. whereas the exhumations were conducted strictly according to international standards and norms of dignified conduct and whereas the monument will be reopened in the cemetery with an official ceremony and participation by anti-Hitler coalition representatives,
- E. whereas the violent demonstrations and attacks against law and order were conducted with active organisation and cooperation by forces located outside Estonia,
- F. whereas several high-level declarations have been made in Russia, including an official statement by the State Duma delegation on its visit to Tallinn, calling on the Estonian Government to step down,
- G. whereas the Estonian Prime Minister has declared that these events constitute 'a well-coordinated and flagrant intervention into the internal affairs of Estonia',
- H. whereas immediately after the riots in Tallinn the normal functioning of the Estonian Embassy in Moscow was blocked for seven days by hostile demonstrators from the Russian pro-government youth organisation 'Nashi', which resulted in physical attacks against the Estonian and Swedish Ambassadors, threats to demolish the embassy building, tearing down the Estonian flag on embassy territory, and labelling Estonia as a 'fascist' country,
- I. whereas systematic cyber-attacks have been organised, mostly from outside Estonia, in an attempt to block official communication lines and the websites of Estonian government institutions and the office of the President, and whereas intensive propaganda attacks have continued via internet and mobile telephone messages calling for armed resistance and further violence,

- J. whereas only a few days after the Tallinn events, wide-scale restrictions on Estonian exports to Russia have been introduced, with Russian companies suspending contracts with Estonian firms and Estonia's energy supplies being threatened,
- K. whereas the Russian authorities, including the State Duma delegation, have unfortunately refused to enter into dialogue with the Estonian authorities and declined even to participate in a joint press conference at the Foreign Ministry,
- L. whereas Metropolitan Kornelius of the Russian Orthodox Church in Estonia has stated that there are no grounds for intercommunal conflict and that he sees no reason to present the riots as a conflict between Estonian-language and Russian-language communities,
- M. whereas only a tiny part of the ethnic Russian population participated in the demonstrations and looting, the considerable number of policemen of Russian background performed their duty with excellence, and the great majority of all those questioned approved the conduct of the Estonian Government,
- N. whereas Estonia, as an independent Member State of the EU and NATO, has the sovereign right to assess its recent tragic past, starting with the loss of independence as a result of the Hitler-Stalin Pact of 1939 and including three years under Hitler's occupation and terror, as well as 48 years under Soviet occupation and terror,
- O. whereas the Soviet occupation and annexation of the Baltic States was never recognised as legal by the Western democracies,
- P. whereas the European Parliament, in its resolution of 12 May 2005, concluded that 'for some nations the end of World War II meant renewed tyranny inflicted by the Stalinist Soviet Union' and congratulated the Central and Eastern European countries on the occasion of having become free 'after so many decades under Soviet domination or occupation...',
- Q. whereas only the legal successor to the Soviet Union, the Russian Federation, still denies the fact of illegal incorporation of the Baltic States into the Soviet Union,
- R. whereas the Russian Federation continues with hostile rhetoric against the Estonian Republic,
1. Expresses its support for, and solidarity with, the democratically elected Estonian Government in its efforts to guarantee order, stability and the rule of law for all residents of Estonia;
 2. Regards attacks targeting one of the smallest EU Member States as a test case for the European Union's solidarity, and invites the Council and the Commission to demonstrate strongly their unity with Estonia;
 3. Considers inadmissible the various attempts to interfere in the internal affairs of Estonia by the Russian authorities (such as calls for the resignation of the Estonian Government) and recalls that under the Helsinki Agreements no country has the right to decide on the destiny of another country;

4. Is alarmed by the scandalously inadequate protection of the Estonian Embassy in Moscow by the Russian authorities and the physical attacks on the Estonian Ambassador by the 'Nashi' demonstrators; calls on the Russian Government to respect the Vienna Convention on the protection of diplomats without any exception;
5. Condemns the attempts by Russia to exert economic pressure on Estonia as an instrument of foreign policy and calls on the Russian Government to restore normal economic relations between the two States;
6. Reminds the Russian authorities that the indiscriminate and openly hostile rhetoric used by the Russian authorities against Estonia is in sharp contrast to the principles of international behaviour and will cause harm to EU-Russia relations as a whole;
7. Calls on the Russian Government to engage in an open and unbiased dialogue with the eastern and central European democracies on the history of the 20th century, as well as the crimes against humanity, including those of totalitarian communism, committed then;
8. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Government and Parliament of Estonia and the Government and Parliament of the Russian Federation.