

(16) Emergency Resolution adopted by the EPP Congress
Rome, 30-31 March 2006

Election Fraud in Belarus

The European People's Party,

- Expressing its solidarity with the repressed people of Belarus, whose fundamental rights and liberties have been denied for twelve years;
- Convinced that the presidential elections on March 19, 2006 clearly violated international democratic standards and fundamental human rights, as observed by the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Council of Europe and others;
- Deeply concerned about the Belarusian government's extensive use of intimidation, repression and violence against the opposition before, during and after the election campaign;
- Deeply concerned about the politically motivated arrests of several hundred demonstrators, including representatives of the EPP sister parties – United Civil Party and Belarusian Popular Front;
- Convinced that arrested activists will not be receiving fair trials in Belarusian courts;
- Recognising the importance of independent broadcasting into Belarus, as well as independent education facilities, provided through neighbouring EU member states;
- Stressing that Alexander Milinkevich, the opposition candidate, is always welcome to participate in any of the political meetings of the party and calls on the European Council to make a similar statement in this regard;
- Convinced that the only way to restore democracy in Belarus is through holding new and truly democratic elections;
- Appreciating the work of the various European NGOs as well as the solidarity manifested by the International community.

The European People's Party:

- Encourages the Belarusian people to continue fighting for their freedom in Minsk and throughout Belarus;
- Urges the Belarusian authorities to immediately release all individuals, groups or organisations detained due to their political beliefs or activities, including the political

leaders of the sister parties of the EPP – United Civil Party and Belarusian Popular Front;

- Calls upon the EU Member States as well as the European Institutions to maintain their support of the Belarusian NGOs and political parties inside and outside the country, as well as independent broadcasting and education facilities in neighbouring EU member states;
- Vigorously condemns the repression carried out by the Belarusian police against demonstrators who were peacefully expressing their opinion on the October Square;
- Demands that the Belarusian authorities stop all violent actions against the demonstrators and allow independent media to freely report from the country without limitations and intimidation;
- Demands that the Belarusian authorities provide complete information about people in custody, the location and the conditions of their detention as well as the charges they face;
- Strongly recommends the situation in Belarus to be put high up on the agenda in political consultations between the European Union and the Russian Federation;
- Urges the EU to take all necessary measures for the freezing of the bank accounts held by the officials of Belarus in the EU;
- Calls on the EU Member States to provide scholarships for Belarusian students in order to make it possible for them to study at European Universities; and furthermore to promote international exchanges, scholarships for visits and advanced professional training programmes for leaders and members of the democratic organizations, students and scholars;
- To introduce cost free visas for Belarusian citizens;
- Demands that the Belarusian authorities respect the freedom of assembly and to refrain from all violent measures against the demonstrators;
- Urges the EU and the EU Member States to extend their support for the independent broadcasting into Belarus.
- Urges the Government of the Russian Federation to use its influence to encourage democratic development in Belarus so that Belarus can become a democratic, prosperous, sovereign, and independent state that is integrated into Europe.