

RESPECTING THE RULE OF LAW IN RUSSIA

Dear Prime Minister Putin,

The ALDE group secured a paragraph in the resolution adopted by the European Parliament last week on Russia, reminding *“the Council and the High Representative of the full array of appropriate measures that may be used when faced with systematic human rights abuses and failures to uphold the rule of law”*.

The paragraph the European Parliament adopted is a political and diplomatic equivalent to a football referee using his yellow card. Belarus and Belarusian leaders and officials are already subject to targeted sanctions such as visa bans and freezing of assets abroad.

European Liberal Democrats believe that respect for the Rule of Law in Russia is not only a prerequisite for good relations with the European Union, but also in the interest of Russia itself.

Continued violations of human rights, political interference in the judicial process and the murder or disappearances of critics and journalists in recent years cast a dark shadow over Russia’s reputation in the world.

Russia is an important neighbour and has a duty, through its commitments as a member of the Council of Europe, to live up to European standards of democracy, fundamental rights and the Rule of Law.

Until it can demonstrate to the outside world, as well as to its own people, that it is living up to these standards, Russia will never become a modern, free society, secure of its place in the global community.

Genuine friends of the Russian people are those who are vigilant and critical when necessary. It is necessary now. We will continue to closely monitor your actions and hold you to account for them until discernible progress is made.



Guy Verhofstadt, MEP
President of the ALDE Group

Kristiina Ojuland, MEP
ALDE spokesperson on EU-Russia relations