

Resolution 2063 (2015)¹

Consideration of the annulment of the previously ratified credentials of the delegation of the Russian Federation (follow-up to paragraph 16 of Resolution 2034 (2015))

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Parliamentary Assembly recalls its [Resolution 2034 \(2015\)](#) on the challenge, on substantive grounds, of the still unratified credentials of the delegation of the Russian Federation, adopted on 28 January 2015. In this resolution, the Assembly resolutely condemned the grave violations of international law committed by the Russian Federation with regard to the conflict in eastern Ukraine and the illegal annexation of Crimea. As a clear expression of its condemnation, the Assembly decided to deprive the Russian delegation to the Assembly of a number of rights for the duration of the 2015 session. However, for the sole and explicit purpose of maintaining an open and constructive dialogue with the Russian delegation, including on its actions with regard to Ukraine, the Assembly decided to ratify the credentials of the Russian delegation. At the same time, in paragraph 16 of [Resolution 2034 \(2015\)](#), the Assembly resolved to annul the credentials of the Russian delegation at its June 2015 part-session if no progress had been made with regard to the implementation of the Minsk Protocol and Memorandum, as well as the demands and recommendations of the Assembly as expressed in that resolution, in particular with regard to the immediate withdrawal of Russian military troops from eastern Ukraine.

2. The Assembly deeply regrets the manifest lack of progress with regard to the implementation of the demands made in [Resolution 2034 \(2015\)](#). It equally regrets the decision of the Russian delegation to suspend all official contacts with the Assembly until the end of 2015, including all visits on behalf of Assembly bodies. The Assembly regards this as a clear rejection of its offer to maintain an open and constructive dialogue, including about Russia's action in Ukraine. This raises questions about the Russian delegation's commitment to co-operate and to maintain a constructive dialogue with the Assembly, including on the honouring of its commitments and obligations to the Council of Europe.

3. The Assembly reiterates its position and demands with regard to the Russian intervention resulting in a military conflict in eastern Ukraine, the illegal annexation of Crimea and the continuing deterioration of the human rights situation in that region, as expressed in [Resolution 1990 \(2014\)](#) on reconsideration on substantive grounds of the previously ratified credentials of the Russian Federation and [Resolution 2034 \(2015\)](#). In addition, it expresses its serious concern about, *inter alia*:

3.1. the harassment and closure of most non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and media outlets in Crimea that are critical of Russia's illegal annexation of the region, including the Crimean Tatar television station ATR;

3.2. the continued deterioration of the human rights situation in eastern Ukraine and credible reports of violations of international human rights and humanitarian law by all sides in the conflict, including persistent abductions, summary killings, arbitrary detention and torture of civilians in the areas under the control of the pro-Russian separatists and Russian troops, as well as summary killings of Ukrainian soldiers captured by pro-Russian illegal armed groups;

1. *Assembly debate* on 24 June 2015 (23rd and 24th Sittings) (see [Doc. 13800](#), report of the Committee on the Honouring of Obligations and Commitments by Member States of the Council of Europe (Monitoring Committee), rapporteur: Mr Stefan Schennach; and [Doc.13827](#), opinion of the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs, rapporteur: Mr Egidijus Vareikis). *Text adopted by the Assembly* on 24 June 2015 (24th Sitting).



3.3. the refusal of the Russian authorities to release Assembly member Nadiia Savchenko and their decision to prolong her pre-trial detention, despite, *inter alia*, her enjoying immunity under the General Agreement on Privileges and Immunities of the Council of Europe and its Protocol (ETS Nos. 2 and 10), to which the Russian Federation is a party;

3.4. the continuing violations, by all sides, of the ceasefire agreed on in the Package of Measures for the Implementation of the Minsk Agreements, signed in Minsk on 12 February 2015, and the continuing presence of heavy artillery in the exclusion zone in violation of these agreements, as well as the offensives against Debaltsevo and Maryinka and the shelling of Mariupol by illegal armed groups backed by Russian regulars, which have led to a considerable number of civilian casualties;

3.5. the continuing presence of Russian troops in eastern Ukraine and the influx of advanced weaponry and “volunteers” from the Russian Federation;

3.6. the harassment and persecution of political activists, NGOs and media organisations in Russia that are critical of Russia’s role in the conflict in eastern Ukraine. In this context, the recent adoption of the “law on undesirable foreign organisations” is an additional matter of serious concern.

4. The Assembly is deeply concerned by the increased harassment and repression of activists and human rights organisations and the intimidation of dissident voices in Russia. Through the setting-up and the application of a repressive legal framework, Russian authorities have placed restrictions on opposition movements, independent media and civil society, thus hindering the freedoms of expression and of assembly. In order to assess the conformity of these recent developments with Council of Europe standards, the Assembly encourages the Secretary General of the Council of Europe to prepare a report on the situation of human rights and democracy in the Russian Federation.

5. Russia’s illegal annexation of Crimea and military intervention in eastern Ukraine demonstrate its clear lack of willingness to honour its accession commitments with regard to its relations with neighbouring States. The Assembly therefore calls on the Russian authorities to renounce their claim of a sphere of special interest with regard to neighbouring States and to promptly implement the demands of the Assembly expressed in paragraph 12 of [Resolution 2034 \(2015\)](#).

6. The Assembly remains convinced that an open dialogue, in good faith, between the Assembly and the Russian delegation remains important in order to find a lasting solution, based on international law and principles, to the conflict in eastern Ukraine and to the illegal annexation of Crimea. It is now essential that the Russian Parliament and its delegation to the Assembly express their unequivocal commitment to enter into a dialogue, without pre-conditions, with the Assembly on Russia’s compliance with the obligations and honouring of commitments to the Council of Europe, including with regard to its policy towards neighbouring States. The Assembly underscores that the acceptance of such a dialogue is a basic tenet of membership of the Parliamentary Assembly incumbent on all delegations. It therefore calls on the Russian delegation to re-establish dialogue with the Assembly without further delay, in particular with regard to the implementation of the demands of the Assembly as expressed in [Resolution 1990 \(2014\)](#) and [Resolution 2034 \(2015\)](#), as well as in this resolution. In this respect, as a first step, the Russian delegation should return to the work of the Committee on the Honouring of Obligations and Commitments by Member States of the Council of Europe (Monitoring Committee) and allow this committee’s rapporteurs for the Russian Federation to go to the country in the context of their work. In addition, the Russian authorities, as the occupying power, should facilitate a joint visit to Crimea for the co-rapporteurs for Ukraine and for the Russian Federation to take stock of the human rights situation in this region.

7. The Assembly deplores the decision by the Russian authorities to blacklist 89 European personalities from entering the Russian Federation. The Assembly condemns the fact that this list contains the names of a current and a former member of the Parliamentary Assembly, who have been included solely because of positions they have taken in the Assembly with regard to Russia’s illegal annexation of Crimea and its military intervention in eastern Ukraine. This is completely unacceptable.

8. In addition, the Assembly calls upon the Russian authorities to:

8.1. fully implement the Minsk Agreements and the Package of Measures for the Implementation of the Minsk Agreements, to which the Russian Federation is a party, and use its influence on the pro-Russian illegal armed groups to do the same;

8.2. immediately reverse the illegal annexation of Crimea;

8.3. withdraw all its troops from Ukrainian territory;

8.4. immediately release Nadiia Savchenko and allow her to return to Ukraine;

- 8.5. release all captives, in particular civilians and those held in the Russian Federation, and to use its influence on the pro-Russian illegal armed groups to do the same;
 - 8.6. cease the harassment and prosecution of citizens, activists, NGOs and media organisations in the Russian Federation that are critical of the Russian Federation's role in Ukraine;
 - 8.7. bring the law on foreign agents fully into line with European standards and principles;
 - 8.8. provide the public with accurate information about the participation of forces of the regular Russian army in the military conflict in Ukraine;
 - 8.9. fully respect the rights to freedom of assembly and expression, including of those critical of the authorities' policies;
 - 8.10. provide the families of missing Russian soldiers with information on the fate of their missing relatives.
9. As a signal of its commitment to an open and constructive dialogue with the Russian delegation, the Assembly, while noting the sanctions currently in place, resolves not to annul, at this time, the already ratified credentials of the Russian delegation.