WRITTEN QUESTION E-1929/02
by Matti Wuori (Verts/ALE) to the Commission
(3 July 2002)

Subject: Case of the Russian military journalist Grigory Pasko

The Russian Supreme Court has set the date for its hearing in the espionage case against journalist Grigory Pasko to 25 June. The conviction of Mr Pasko has caused huge protests both in and outside Russia. The European Parliament adopted, on 7 February 2002, a resolution on the jailing of the Russian military journalist Grigory Pasko and the closure of TV-6 (P5_TA(2002)0067).

An issue which has not been subject to particular attention is the considerable disinformation on Pasko's case that Russian authorities and the state controlled media have brought up.

When meeting with Jacques Chirac in Paris in January 2002, President Putin stated publicly that it was an undisputed fact that Pasko had transferred classified information to Japan. This is not true. Pasko was convicted of collecting information with the intention of handing it over, but the handing-over never took place.

Furthermore, the Kremlin-controlled national ORT-TV has transmitted several programmes on this case. These programmes present a highly twisted version of events, and appear as an attempt to smear Pasko in the public eye as a traitor and a spy.

Is the Commission aware of the state of affairs in Mr Pasko's case? Since the final verdict against Pasko has not yet been given, the above-mentioned seems to be in disconformity with the presumption of innocence. Will the Commission bring this up with the relevant Russian authorities? Will the Commission continue to monitor the Pasko case, and what concrete steps will it envisage in that respect?

WRITTEN QUESTION E-1978/02
by Olivier Dupuis (NI) to the Commission
(8 July 2002)

Subject: Case of Grigory Pasko

On 25 June the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation is at last due to consider the appeal by Mr Grigory Pasko, against his conviction and four-year prison sentence for espionage, keeping supposedly secret information with the 'intention' of subsequently revealing it. Mr Pasko has been held in solitary confinement since 25 December 2001. The Supreme Court may decide to acquit Mr Pasko, recognising the absence of any legal basis for the charges against him and the illegality of the police and judicial procedures used in his case, or confirm the earlier verdict and increase the term of imprisonment, or, which seems more likely, cancel the verdict and refer the case back to the Pacific Fleet Court, thus continuing the persecution and harassment suffered by Mr Pasko since 1997.

What steps has the Commission taken to secure an early resolution of the Pasko case in accordance with the principles of the rule of law and the international conventions on human rights and fundamental freedoms ratified by the Russian Federation? What political, diplomatic and other initiatives does the Commission intend to take if the Russian Supreme Court were to confirm Mr Pasko's conviction thereby demonstrating yet again that the judicial system is subordinate to the political and military authorities? In the light of the interminable persecution suffered by Mr Pasko, does the Commission not consider that the funding of environmental protection and rehabilitation programmes in Russia must be linked to effective freedom of investigation and freedom to reveal the findings of such investigations by Russian citizens, whether they are journalists or not?