



# EP Chairs concerned by human rights breaches in Russia ahead of the 2018 FIFA World Cup

Press Releases - 2 hours ago

## Joint Statement on sporting events and human rights on the occasion of the opening of the 2018 FIFA World Cup in Russia

Ahead of the opening of the FIFA Football World Cup in Russia, Foreign Affairs Committee Chair, David McAllister (EPP, DE), Human Rights Subcommittee Chair, Pier Antonio Panzeri (S&D, IT), and the Chair of the Delegation to the EU-Russia Parliamentary Cooperation Committee, Othmar Karas (EPP, AT), stated:

"We hold sports to be a value that brings people and nations together. The World Cup is a celebration for mankind and an occasion to reaffirm our ideals for peace, freedom and international cooperation.

We affirm that the protection of human rights comes before any other concern. We note that Russia has consistently displayed a poor human rights record, including in the preparation of the World Cup that starts today. This includes severe limitations to press freedom, jailing of journalists and political adversaries, intimidation of human rights defenders and other instances of breaches of human rights that should not be tolerated.

We call for large sporting events to become an occasion for reflection and change. We call on the international bodies governing the games to enforce the human rights they commit to in their statutes when awarding and preparing the organization of large sporting events and to increase transparency and strengthen cooperation with independent media and civil society".

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## Further information

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› [EP Foreign Affairs Committee Chair, David McAllister \(EPP, DE\)](#)

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› [Foreign Affairs Committee \(AFET\)](#)

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› [EP Human Rights Subcommittee Chair, Pier Antonio Panzeri \(S&D, IT\)](#)

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› [Human Rights Subcommittee \(DROI\)](#)

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› [EP Delegation for relations with Russia, Othmar Karas \(EPP, AT\)](#)

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› [Delegation to the EU-Russia Parliamentary Cooperation Committee \(D-RU\)](#)

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