

14 February 2000

B5-0129/2000

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

further to the Council statement

pursuant to Rule 37(2) of the Rules of Procedure

by Mr Wuori and others

on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group

on the EU's priorities for the 56th session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR)

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Resolution on the EU's priorities for the 56th session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its resolution of 11 March 1999 on the UN Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR) and its earlier resolutions on this issue,
 - having regard to the commitment, the excellent flow of information and the recommendations on human rights from civil society, in particular the national and international human rights non-governmental organisations such as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and the International Federation on Human Rights,
- A. whereas the promotion of human rights is established in the Treaties as an objective of the Common Foreign and Security Policy,
- B. whereas next year will be the 50th Anniversary of the Geneva Conventions,
- C. whereas the UN Commission on Human rights is the pre-eminent forum for the discussion of human rights in the UN system, and whereas human rights violations in specific countries are a legitimate concern of this body,
- D. whereas the 56th Session of the UN Commission on Human Rights is scheduled to start on 20 March 2000 in Geneva,
- E. concerned about the apparent lack of preparation and firm positioning on the part of the Portuguese Presidency in relation to this Session,
1. Congratulates the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights for its excellent work in very difficult conditions, for its impartiality and for its commitment to safeguard respect for human rights of all groups and individuals throughout the world;
 2. Urges the European Union to make the strengthening of the mechanisms of the UNCHR – as under review in the 'Working Group on the Enhancement of the Mechanisms of the Commission' - a top priority and to play a pro-active leadership role in the review process;
 3. Calls upon the UNCHR to appoint a Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders with a mandate to monitor, document and intervene on behalf of human rights defenders, to devise an effective strategy to give them more protection and to study ways to monitor the implementation of the Declaration on Human Rights Defenders as adopted by the UN in 1998;
 4. Calls upon the UNCHR to adopt a resolution urging all states that have not yet abolished the death penalty to do so without delay and in that context to establish a moratorium on all

executions, in particular halting all executions of persons below 18 years of age; congratulates in this regard the Governor of the USA State of Illinois;

5. Calls upon the UNCHR to adopt a resolution urging all states not to recruit or deploy any persons under 18 years of age for the purpose of armed conflict and to adhere fully to the recently agreed Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflicts; urges the ECOSOC to adopt the protocol in order to open it for ratification;
6. Calls upon the UNCHR to establish an Intersessional Working Group with a mandate to study and adopt, with the full and active participation of NGOs in the process and within the tightest possible timeframe, a strong Convention on 'enforced disappearance' which strengthens the current draft International Convention on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance;
7. Calls upon the UNCHR to adopt a resolution to give full support to its working group on the draft optional protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment in order to create a global inspection system of places of detention;
8. Calls upon the UNCHR to take all necessary steps to further improve the preparation of the World Conference on Racism to be held in the year 2001;
9. Calls upon the UNHCR to adopt a resolution calling on all states to ratify and implement the UN Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women; calls for an early UN Convention on punishment for trafficking in persons; in this connection urges all states to adopt and implement legislation strongly opposing all violence against women, including sexual violence;
10. Calls upon the UNCHR to adopt a resolution calling on all states to sign and ratify without delay the Statute on the International Criminal Court;
11. Calls upon the UNCHR to take all steps necessary to end the repression of independent journalism, to urge all states to end censorship, to protect the right of access to official information, to abolish draconian defamation laws, to abolish state control of essential media services and to stop the restriction of citizens' access to modern information technology;
12. Calls upon the UNCHR to adopt a resolution expressing its concern at the widespread human rights violations which continue in China; urges the European Union to adhere to the position of the Parliament, as expressed in a resolution adopted on 20 January 2000, and to support and sponsor all initiatives in this context;
13. Calls upon the UNCHR to adopt a resolution condemning the gross abuses of human rights by the Russian armed forces in Chechnya, urging the Russian Government to stop all indiscriminate attacks on civilians and to grant access to all representatives of

international organisations and the media to the region to investigate the current human rights situation of the civilian population, in particular in the detention camps;

14. Calls upon the UNCHR to appoint a Special Rapporteur on Uzbekistan to monitor the rapid and severe deterioration of human rights in that country;
15. Calls upon the UNCHR to adopt a resolution expressing concern about human rights violations in the former Republic of Yugoslavia and Kosovo, in particular urging the Yugoslav authorities to release all their political prisoners;
16. Calls upon the UNCHR to adopt a resolution expressing concern about human rights violations in Mexico, urging the Mexican government to ensure that all perpetrators of human rights violations will be brought to trial in a fair system of justice;
17. Calls upon the UNCHR to adopt a resolution expressing its concern at the worsening human rights situation in Colombia, urging the government to end impunity and respect international recommendations concerning the dismantling of paramilitary groups, the reform of the military penal code and the situation of displaced persons, and to maintain and reinforce the Colombian Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights;
18. Calls upon the UNCHR to adopt a resolution condemning gross and systematic human rights violations in Saudi Arabia, in particular urging the government to suspend executions and sign and ratify the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women;
19. Calls upon the UNCHR to adopt a resolution expressing its concern at the ever-deteriorating situation of the civilian population of Iraq as a result of government repression and the continuation of the international embargo; urges Iraq to release all its prisoners of war and provide information about disappeared persons to the ICRC, indicating whether they are alive or dead;
20. Calls upon the UNCHR to urge the Government of Indonesia to take immediate steps to prevent intimidation, harassment, and attacks by militias on refugees in West Timor who wish to return to East Timor;
21. Calls upon the UNCHR to carry out a full investigation of gross human rights abuses in Sierra Leone and to establish a commission of inquiry, charged with creating the data base needed for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission as announced in the peace agreement of July 1999;
22. Calls upon the UNCHR to extend the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on Sudan and to adopt a strong resolution addressing the human right abuses in that country;
23. Calls upon the UNCHR to renew the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the Democratic Republic of Congo, including continued investigation into the events of 1996-97, and provide the necessary support for the Rapporteur and the High Commissioner's field office in Kinshasa;

24. Expresses its concern, against this background, about the current policy of the Council of the European Union of undermining the right of asylum in the European Union, in particular by the use of the so-called readmission clause; points out in particular that such clauses are a breach of the Geneva Convention of 1951 defining the status of refugees, the access to asylum procedures and the principle of 'non-refoulement';
25. Calls upon the Presidency, Council and Commission to make use of all the political means at their disposal to make sure that the UNCHR will take effective action on all the above-mentioned issues;
26. Calls upon the Presidency, Council and Commission to establish structural contact and dialogue with representatives of civil society, in particular with human rights organisations, during the session in Geneva;
27. Resolves to send a delegation of members of the Foreign Affairs Committee and the Development Committee to Geneva to participate in the session;
28. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Presidency, the Council, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the UN Commission on Human Rights, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Governments of all the states mentioned in this resolution, as well as to the Council of Europe and the OSCE.