

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2004



2009

Session document

14.11.2006

B6-0606/2006

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

with request for inclusion in the agenda for the debate on cases of breaches of human rights, democracy and the rule of law

pursuant to Rule 115 of the Rules of Procedure

by Michael Gahler, Mario Mauro and Bernd Posselt

on behalf of the PPE-DE Group

on Ethiopia

European Parliament resolution on Ethiopia

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on post election crisis and the serious human rights violations,
- having regard to Rule 115(5) of its Rules of Procedure,
 - A. disturbed by the arrest and the expulsion of two European commission officials from the country on the allegation that they tried to help Ms Yalemzewd Bekele, a lawyer and women's rights campaigner, working for the European Commission in Addis Abeba, to get out of the country,
 - B. whereas there are reports of continuing arrests, harassment, arbitrary detention, humiliation and intimidation of opposition politicians, civil society activists, students and other ordinary citizens,
 - C. whereas Ms Yalemzewd Bekele was released on 27 October after having been detained incommunicado for a few days, after a high level EU intervention in her favour,
 - D. whereas the national parliament established a government backed Commission of Inquiry at the end of November 2005 with the mission to investigate the June and November killings,
 - E. whereas members of the Inquiry Committee had been pressured by the Government of Ethiopia to alter the findings and four of them, including the Chairman and vice-chairman have left the country after refusing government orders to alter the final report findings,
 - F. whereas these officials have managed to leave the country with the final report and that this document overwhelmingly condemns the government's handling of the crisis which left 193 citizens killed in June and November 2005 demonstrations,
 - G. whereas following mass arrests of government opponents, human rights activists and journalists during demonstrations in June and November 2005, more than one hundred opposition party leaders, journalists and human rights defenders remain detained and are facing trial on charges including "outrage against the Constitution", "inciting, organizing or leading armed rebellion" and "attempted genocide",
 - H. recalling that post election political detainees include Hailu Shawel, President of the Coalition for Unity and Democracy, Professor Mesfin Woldemariam, former Chair of the Ethiopian Human Rights Council, Dr Yacob Hailemariam, former UN Special Envoy and former Prosecutor of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, Ms Birtukan Mideksa, former judge, Dr Birhanu Nega, Mayor-elect of Addis Ababa,

Netsanet Demissie, Director of the Organisation for Social Justice in Ethiopia, and Daniel Bekele of Action Aid Ethiopia,

- I. concerned over the recent arrest of Wassihun Melese and Anteneh Getne, members of the Ethiopian Teachers Association, and that these new arrests seem to be a response to ETA complaints against government interference in the association's activities and intimidation of leaders,
- J. whereas Prime Minister Meles Zenawi is one of the EU Commission guests at the European Development Days, organised from 13 to 17 November 2006 in Brussels,
- K. whereas Ethiopia is a signatory to the Partnership Agreement between the Members of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States on the one part, and the European Community and its Member States, on the other part (Cotonou Agreement), article 96 of which stipulates that respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms is an essential element of ACP-EU cooperation,
 1. Welcomes the EU efforts for the release of Ms Yalemzewd Bekele and regrets deeply the expulsion of two EU officials, Mr. Bjorn Jonsson and Enrico Sborgi from Ethiopia;
 2. Calls on the Government of Ethiopia to publish without any further delay the final report of the Commission of Inquiry in its entirety; calls for the relevant court instances to be supplied with the report, to take due account of it in order to allow for a fair trial or an immediate release of the accused in the so-called "treason and genocide" trial and to immediately release prisoners who were arrested and have not been charged since then;
 3. Calls on the Ethiopian authorities to refrain from acts of intimidation and harassment against national leaders including court judges and members of the Teachers Association in pursuit of their professional obligations;
 4. Calls on the Ethiopian Government to disclose the total number of persons detained throughout the country, to allow visits by the International Committee of the Red Cross, and to allow all detainees access to their families, legal counsel and any medical care that their health situation may require;
 5. Calls on the Government of Ethiopia to respect the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the African Union Charter of Human and Peoples' Rights, including the right to peaceful assembly, freedom of opinion and to guarantee the independence of the judiciary system;
 6. Deeply regrets the EU Commission's invitation to Prime Minister Meles Zenawi to address the European Development Days, especially on governance issues which gives the wrong signal with regard to EU's policy on respect for human rights, democratic principles, rule of law and good governance;
 7. Asks the Commission and the Council to closely monitor the situation in Ethiopia and

considers that development co-operation programmes under the Cotonou agreement should depend on respect for human rights and good governance, as clearly defined in the essential element clause;

8. Calls on the Commission and the Council to explore ways and means to organise an all inclusive inter-Ethiopian dialogue with the participation of political parties, civil society organisations and all stakeholders in order to work out a lasting solution to the current political crisis;
9. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Ethiopian Government, the Secretary General of the United Nations and the African Union Executive Council, Commission and Pan-African Parliament.