EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT 2009 - 2014

Plenary sitting

12.6.2012 B7-0330/2012

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

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

pursuant to Rule 122 of the Rules of Procedure

on the Philippines
(2012/2681(RSP))

Fiorello Provera, Lorenzo Fontana, Mara Bizzotto, Jaroslav Paška, Juozas Imbrasas
on behalf of the EFD Group

B7-0330/2012

European Parliament resolution on the Philippines
(2012/2681(RSP))

The European Parliament,

,– having regard to its previous resolutions on the Philippines, in particular that of 20 January 2011 and of 21 January 2010

– having regard to the UN Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Additional Protocol thereto, to which the Philippines are a signatory,

– having regard to the statement by the Vice-President/High Representative of the Union for Foreign and Security Policy of 24 April 2012 on the ratification by the Philippines of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT)

– having regard to the United Nations Human Rights Council Universal Periodic Review Second Cycle on the Philippines

– having regard to the European Delegation in the Philippines statement on the recent incidences of violence in Mindanao of 24 October 2011

– having regard to the Commission's Country Strategy Paper 2007-2013 for the Philippines,

– having regard to Rule 122(5) of its Rules of Procedure,

A. whereas political killings and disappearances, especially of members of opposition organisations, journalists, human rights activists and religious leaders, continue to be widespread in the Philippines, and whereas human rights organisations speak of more than 1000 politically motivated murders and disappearances in the past decade,

B. whereas the virtual impunity of the perpetrators and the government's inability effectively to tackle politically motivated violence in the country makes it very difficult to bring those responsible to justice, despite the undertakings given by the government as part of its Universal Periodic Review in 2008,

C. whereas hundreds of thousands of people remain internally displaced by the conflict opposing the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the New People's Army, which remains active throughout the country, and by military operations against criminal groups such as the Abu Sayyaf Group in the island provinces of Sulu and Basilan in Western Mindanao,

D. whereas on 23 November 2009 100 armed men from a local militia led by the Ampatuan family, including officials of the local police force, tortured and brutally murdered 57 members of a convoy, including female relatives of Esmail Mangudadatu, some of whom were raped, lawyers and 30 journalists, who were on their way to file Mangudadatu's candidacy for the governorship of Maguindanao province in Mindanao,

E. whereas one hundred suspects involved in the massacre in Maguindanao have not been brought to justice for taking part in the worst case of election-related violence in Philippine history

F. whereas in May 2012 the body of former militiaman Esmail Amil Enog, who testified in July 2011 regarding the Maguindanao case, was found two months after he went missing and is the third witness to have been killed since the trial began in 2010 and relatives of witnesses have reported being attacked, threatened and harassed;

G. whereas elections in the Philippines have in the past been marred by frequent extrajudicial killings of political opponents committed by private armies and militias, many of them armed with government-issued weapons, employed by politically influential families,

1. Strongly condemns the Maguindanao massacre of 23 November 2009 and expresses its solidarity with the families of the deceased and calls for all the perpetrators to be brought to justice, and the provision of adequate protection for all witnesses, judges, lawyers and prosecutors involved in investigation and trials;

2. Calls on the Philippines Government to take decisive steps in order to end extrajudicial killings and disappearances, and to shed light on all other unresolved cases, and provide adequate protection for journalists who face intimidation and threats as a result of their work;

3. Welcomes the signing in October 2009 of the Financing Agreement for the EU-Philippines Justice Support Programme (EPJUST), which allocates €3.9m in support, assistance and training to strengthen the criminal justice system and support the work of the Commission on Human Rights and of civil society groups; looks forward to the reports on the work of the monitoring system, to be established under EPJUST, that will be responsible for tracking the nation's progress in combating extrajudicial killings and related abuses;

4. Expresses its concern that the declaration of a state of emergency by the President, combined with the conferral of greater powers on the armed forces, which in the past have been implicated in numerous extrajudicial killings, will not prevent or curb election-related violence in Mindanao province;

5. Calls on the Philippines Government to step up efforts to eliminate instances of political violence in order to safeguard the future of democracy in the Philippines and to take steps designed to protect the media and freedom of expression in general;

6. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy the President and Government of the Philippines, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.