



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2009 - 2014

Plenary sitting

22.5.2012

B7-0250/2012

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 Venezuela: possible withdrawal from the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights
(2012/2653(RSP))

Renate Weber, Marietje Schaake, Ramon Tremosa i Balcells, Kristiina Ojula, Louis Michel, Marielle de Sarnez, Robert Rochefort, Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, Sonia Alfano, Johannes Cornelis van Baalen
on behalf of the ALDE Group

B7-0250/2012

European Parliament resolution on Venezuela: possible withdrawal from the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (2012/2653(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Venezuela of 23 May 2007 on the Channel Radio Caracas TV, that of 24 October 2008 on political disqualifications, that of 7 May 2009 on the case of Manuel Rosales, that of 11 February 2010 on Venezuela and that of 8 July 2010 on the case of Maria Lourdes Afuni,
 - having regard to the American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man of 1948 that formalised the beginning of the Inter-American system for the protection of Human rights (IAHRS) and having regard to the implementation of the American Convention on Human Rights of 1979
 - having regard the creation by the Organization of American States (OAS) of the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights in 1959, being effectively installed in 1979, to which Venezuela is a party since 1977
 - having regard to the setting up of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in 1979 to which Venezuela is party since 1981,
 - having regard to the European Parliament resolution of 17 June 2010 on EU policies in favour of human rights defenders and the EP resolution of 18 April 2012 on the Annual Report on Human Rights in the World and the European Union's policy on the matter, including implications for the EU's strategic human rights policy,
 - having regard to the concerns expressed by the Spokesperson for the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Rupert Colville on Venezuela's possible withdrawal from the IACHR of 4 May 2012,
 - having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948
 - having regard to Rule 122 of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man, declares that one of the principles upon which the OAS is founded is the “fundamental rights of the individual”,
- B. whereas on 2 May 2012 President Chavez announced the establishment of a State Committee to evaluate the possibility of withdrawing from the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR); whereas on 3 May 2012 Foreign Affairs Minister asked other governments of the region to do the same;

- C. whereas from 1970 to 2011 four decisions of the IACHR concerned Venezuela and the Court ruled over 12 cases from 2004 to 2012; whereas the Organisation of American States through the Inter-American Commission of Human rights warned Venezuela several times on violations of freedom of expression, personal security and impunity, and political rights;
 - D. whereas for the last few years, Venezuela has strongly criticized the Commission and the Court and has threatened many times to withdraw arguing that the Commission is bias and has a double standard; whereas this is the first time Venezuela takes serious steps to do it; whereas since 2002 Venezuela has denied all the petitions from the Commission to visit the country;
 - E. whereas the IACHR, a highly respected body with a positive impact in the region, has been crucial in obtaining justice for large numbers of victims of human rights violations, and has also played a key role in the transition to democracy from the dictatorships that ruled many countries in the region;
 - F. whereas the IACHR submits cases to the Inter-American Court, asks Member States of the OAS to adopt "precautionary measures" to prevent irreparable harm of human rights in grave and urgent cases and receives, analyzes and investigates individual petitions alleging violations of human rights;
 - G. whereas regional human rights bodies play a very important role in the promotion and protection of human rights mechanisms and reinforce universal human rights standards and treaties, something that has been repeatedly recognized by the UN General Assembly and its Human Rights Council, NGOs and human rights defenders;
 - H. whereas according to Article 1 of its Statute, the Inter-American Court is an autonomous judicial institution whose objective is to apply and interpret the American Convention; whereas its decisions are compulsory for the signatories of the American Convention;
1. Is concerned at Venezuela's announcement that it is establishing a State committee to evaluate the possibility of withdrawing from the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and calls on the Venezuelan authorities to reconsider this position.
 2. Encourages the Government of Venezuela and all other States in the region, to continue to cooperate with regional and international human rights mechanisms, and urges them not to take any measures that would weaken human rights protection.
 3. Welcomes all the work done by the Inter-American Human Rights Commission notably on issues relating to freedom of expression, the rights of indigenous people, torture and fostering public awareness of human rights in the region.
 4. Calls on the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to respect and comply with international and regional Conventions and Charters, to which Venezuela

is a signatory; reminds that all those signed international conventions are compulsory under Venezuelan Constitution.

5. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the Secretary General of the Organisation of American States (OEA), the EUROLAT Parliamentary Assembly, the Mercosur Parliament and the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.