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Session document

19.10.2009

B7-0088/2009 }
B7-0089/2009 }
B7-0091/2009 } RC1

JOINT MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

pursuant to Rule 110(4) of the Rules of Procedure

replacing the motions by the following groups:

PPE (B7-0088/2009)

ECR (B7-0089/2009)

EFD (B7-0091/2009)

on freedom of information in Italy and in other EU Member States

**Manfred Weber, Simon Busuttil, Mario Mauro, Salvatore Iacolino,
Roberta Angelilli, Clemente Mastella, Elisabetta Gardini**

on behalf of the PPE Group

Timothy Kirkhope

on behalf of the ECR Group

Fiorello Provera, Francesco Enrico Speroni

on behalf of the EFD Group

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PE428.694v01-00}
PE428.695v01-00}
PE428.697v01-00} RC1

European Parliament resolution on freedom of information in Italy and in other EU Member States

The European Parliament,

- having regard to international and European human rights obligations, such as those contained in the UN conventions on human rights and in the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms,
 - having regard to Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights, concerning freedom of expression and information and the right to media pluralism,
 - having regard to Article 21 of the Constitution of the Italian Republic,
 - having regard to the statements by the Commission and the debate held in the European Parliament on 8 October 2009,
 - having regard to Rule 110(4) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas it is inappropriate to claim that freedom of information is being flouted in Italy, considering that its citizens, including journalists, historians, philosophers, scholars, writers and teachers, avail themselves of freedom of expression in their everyday lives,
- B. whereas the lack of freedom of information is typical of life under dictatorships and totalitarian regimes which have deprived or are continuing to deprive people of their fundamental rights and freedoms,
- C. whereas in Italy freedom of the press is guaranteed by the Constitution, in which the right to full freedom of thought and expression is enshrined,
- D. whereas Italy has a wide range of free and independent media, including newspapers, radio and television operating at national, regional and local level and enjoying full freedom of information and expression,
- E. whereas according to data from the independent Pavia Observatory concerning the media in May and June 2009 – a period coinciding with the campaign for the European elections – the air time given to representatives of opposition parties was 60% on the televised news programmes of Rai-Tv and 49% on the televised news programmes of the Mediaset Group,
- F. whereas over the last few days the President of the Italian Republic, Mr Giorgio Napolitano, has observed – during discussions on this matter with Members of the European Parliament elected in Italy – that the European Parliament 'cannot act as a court of appeal in respect of decisions by national parliaments and national government policies' and that appropriate fora exist for this purpose,
- G. whereas, as stated by Commissioner Reding on 8 October 2009 during the debate on freedom of information in Italy, Members of the European Parliament should not 'make use of the EU

institutions to solve problems which should, under our Treaties, be solved at national level',

- H. whereas in Italy legal redress in cases of alleged defamation is available to every individual, this being a statutory right enjoyed by every individual and one that has been exercised by political leaders of every hue in the past; whereas the exercise of a right may in no case be considered as an act of intimidation,
1. Affirms that freedom of the press and of information is a firmly established value in the daily life of every Italian citizen, and is in no way under any threat;
 2. Stresses the role which the local and regional media in Italy play in promoting the pluralism of information sources and preserving the diversity of regional languages and cultures;
 3. Stresses furthermore that the pluralism of information in Italy is further guaranteed by the extensive free access which exists to the most modern sectors of communications, such as the Internet, digital services, satellite and cable;
 4. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the governments and parliaments of the Member States.