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WRITTEN DECLARATION

submitted under Rule 136 of the Rules of Procedure

on the conservation and welfare of Asian elephants

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Lapse date: 14.1.2016

Written declaration, under Rule 136 of Parliament's Rules of Procedure, on the conservation and welfare of Asian elephants¹

1. The wild Asian elephant population is estimated to have decreased by 30 % in the past 15 years, with the total population now numbering 40 000 or fewer.
2. Despite legislative measures and efforts being made by Asian elephant range states (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam) to improve the conservation status of their elephant populations and to deliver the Asian Elephant Action Plan, many elephants kept in captivity are confined to small enclosures, shackled, malnourished and isolated.
3. Many Asian elephants used in tourist attractions and festivals etc. have been captured and smuggled from the wild as babies or juveniles and, despite protective legislation, are treated barbarically.
4. Wild Asian elephant populations continue to be threatened by habitat degradation and destruction, the obstruction of traditional migratory routes (fuelling increasing human/elephant conflict) and ivory poaching.
5. In order to prevent further decline, the illegal international trade in wild elephants must be stopped and the welfare of those in captivity improved.
6. The Commission and the Council are hence called upon to cooperate proactively with the governments of all Asian elephant range states and NGOs which work to protect wild and captive elephants from current threats.
7. This declaration, together with the names of the signatories, is forwarded to the Council and the Commission.

¹ Under Rule 136(4) and (5) of Parliament's Rules of Procedure, where a declaration is signed by a majority of Parliament's component Members, it is published in the minutes with the names of its signatories and forwarded to the addressees, without however binding Parliament.