

10/3/03

Motion for a resolution

pursuant to Rule 50

65-177/03

hider

tabled by Ari VATANEN, Ignacio SALAFRANCA, Bert DOORN and Bernd POSSELT

in the name of the EPP-ED Group

on the situation in Cambodia on the eve of the general elections of 27 July 2003

The European Parliament

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Cambodia,
- having regard to the EC-Cambodia Framework Cooperation Agreement of 1 November 1999,
- having regard to the Commission communication on EU election assistance and observation (COM (2000) 191),
- having regard to the EC-Cambodia Strategy Paper 2000-2003,
- having regard to the Declaration of 1 March 2002 by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union on the Commune Elections in Cambodia,
- having regard to the observations made by the delegation of Members of the European Parliament after visiting Cambodia from 11 - 14 September 2002,

A. whereas general elections will be held on 27 July 2003 marking another important step in the democratisation process of the country,

B. alarmed by the violent deaths of a number of political activists in the past few months,

C. whereas the Sam Rainsy Party has denounced the flawed voter registration process and expressed fears of intimidation of political parties, especially the opposition, ahead of the upcoming parliamentary elections,

D. whereas the opposition had virtually no access to any State-owned broadcast media in the general elections of 1998 and the commune elections of 2002,

E. whereas the destruction of the embassy of Thailand and Thai businesses in Phnom Penh by mostly students and other youngsters on 29 January 2003 threatens the development of the democracy in Cambodia,

F. concerned about allegations by government officials without any reliable proof that opposition leader Sam Rainsy was one of the violent demonstrators on 29 January 2003,

328.850

G. concerned about the arrests, in connection with the anti-Thai riots of Mr Mam Sonando, owner and operator of the independent Beehive radio station, and In Chan Sivutha, editor of the Light of Angkor newspaper, even though they have been temporarily released after the King's intervention,

H. noting that the figures released by the National Election Committee showing that more than 90 percent of the Cambodian voters have registered to vote in the general elections are widely contested by the opposition as being heavily exaggerated,

I. concerned about the Government's decision in January 2003 to bar Christian groups from presenting religious propaganda in public,

J. deeply concerned about the impunity accorded to those, mainly from Europe, who sexually abuse children and the lack of political will of the Government to stop child prostitution in the country,

1. Condemns the political killings as well as the intimidation taking place during the pre-election period;
2. Urges the Government of Cambodia to stop the violence and guarantee free and fair elections without intimidation and harassment;
3. Calls on the Government of Cambodia to give the opposition a fair access to State-owned broadcast media before and during the legal period of electoral campaigning;
4. Calls on the Commission and the Council to send an EU observer mission as soon as possible to monitor the general elections;
5. Calls on the Government of Cambodia to respect the freedom of expression and the freedom of religion and reverse its decision to bar Christian groups from presenting religious propaganda in public;
6. Requests the Cambodian authorities to take all necessary measures to end the abuse of children and child prostitution, and to bring to justice those responsible;
7. Instruct its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the Government and Parliament of Cambodia.