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EUROPEAN LIBERAL DEMOCRATS
LES LIBERAUX DEMOCRATES EUROPEENS
EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT
PARLEMENT EUROPEEN

BS-186/03

Strasbourg, 10 March 2003

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

with request for inclusion in the debate on topical and urgent subjects of major importance pursuant to Rule 50 of the Rules of Procedure

by Jules Maaten on behalf of the ELDR 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 killing of Om Rathasady, a senior adviser to the National Assembly Chairman, and the attempted murder of Nhek Kakada, the son of a Sam Rainsy Party activist, are signs of a new escalation in violence and intimidation before the elections take place;

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- D. whereas Cambodia's government decided to close its borders with Thailand;
- E. 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 election;
- F. 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;
- G. concerned about allegations by government officials, with no reliable proof, that opposition leader Sam Rainsy was one of the violent demonstrators on 29 January 2003;
- H. concerned about the arrests of Mr Mam Sonando, owner and operator of the independent Beehive radio station, and In Chan Sivutha, editor of the Light of Angkor newspaper, in connection with the anti-Thai riots;
- I. noting that the National Election Committee has released figures showing that more than 90 percent of Cambodian voters have registered to vote in the general election;
- J. concerned about the government's decision in January 2003 to bar Christian groups from presenting religious propaganda in public;
- K. whereas, in spite of an intervention from King Norodom Sihanouk giving his support to the right to vote for Buddhist monks, the Cambodian People's Party (CPP) decided not to allow monks to vote;
- L. whereas the trafficking of human beings to, within, and from Cambodia, for the purposes of forced labour including prostitution, begging, and adoption remains a major problem;
- M. whereas Cambodia has ratified the International Criminal Court treaty;
- N. whereas Mon Sonando, owner of the Sambok Kmum radio station, and In Chan Situtha, editor of Rasmei Angkor newspaper, were arrested on 30 and 31 January respectively on charges of inciting riots against the Royal Thai Embassy and Thai businesses in the Cambodian capital in January;
- O. whereas opposition newspapers were increasingly subject to threats, closure, and arrests of staff;
- P. whereas the electronic media remains under the control of persons and companies affiliated with Prime Minister Hun Sen's Cambodian People's Party;
- Q. Recalling that Cambodia is the largest recipient of per capita aid;

1. Condemns the political killings, as well as the intimidation, taking place during the pre-election period;
2. Condemns the unilateral and unexpected decision by the Phnom Penh government to seal all land border crossings with Thailand;
3. Expresses its concern that the border closure will affect the livelihoods of tens of thousands of poor Cambodian citizens;
4. Calls on all responsible leaders to push for the annulment of this decision and the opening of serious negotiations with the government in order to normalise the relationship between the two countries as soon as possible;
5. Urges the Government of Cambodia to stop the violence and guarantee free and fair elections without intimidation and harassment;
6. Calls on the Commission and the Council to send an EU observer mission to monitor the general elections;
7. 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;
8. Urges the political parties in Cambodia to take a stand against child prostitution during the general elections;
9. Calls for a pro-active commitment by EU representatives in Phnom Penh with regard to human and civil rights improvement in Cambodia, and EU aid to be conditional thereupon;
10. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments of ASEAN member states and the government and parliament of Cambodia.

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