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B5-0367/2003

## **MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION**

further to Oral Questions B5-0271/2003 and B5-0272/2003

pursuant to Rule 42(5) of the Rules of Procedure

by Jannis Sakellariou and Raimon Obiols i Germà

on behalf of the PSE Group

on EU-Cuba relations

**European Parliament resolution on EU-Cuba relations**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to its previous resolutions on the situation in Cuba, as well as to its resolution of 25 April 2002 on the European Union's role in promoting human rights and democratisation in third countries,
  - having regard to the declarations of 5 June and 26 March 2003 by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union concerning the continuing flagrant violation of human rights and of fundamental freedoms in Cuba,
- A. whereas one of the main objectives of the European Union continues to be to uphold the universality and indivisibility of human rights – including civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights – as proclaimed by the 1993 World Conference in Vienna on human rights,
- B. whereas the European Union has recently decided to limit bilateral high-level governmental visits; to reduce the profile of Member States' participation in cultural events; to invite Cuban dissidents to national day celebrations; and to proceed to the re-evaluation of the EU common position,
- C. whereas the Government of Cuba from its side has decided to withdraw for the second time its request for accession to the Cotonou Agreement,
- D. whereas Cuba remains the only Latin American country not having a bilateral cooperation agreement with the Union, in spite of the fact that Europe as a whole has been Cuba's most important trade and investment source,
- E. whereas the US policy of confrontation during more than 44 years (embargo, extraterritorial laws such as Helms-Burton, etc) is not a constructive approach to promoting change or reform of the Cuban regime,
- F. whereas in the meantime the Cuban population continues to suffer the consequences not only of the human rights violations and of the economic weaknesses of the regime, but also of the above-mentioned hardline attitude of the US,
1. Reiterates its firm condemnation of the continuing flagrant violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of members of the Cuban opposition and independent journalists, and urges the Cuban authorities to release all political prisoners immediately;
  2. Calls on the Commission and Council to monitor the issue of political prisoners in Cuban jails and to take all necessary steps to secure the immediate release of all of them;

3. Reminds the Cuban authorities that no law may restrict the right of freedom of expression and under no circumstances may it impose prison sentences on individuals exercising that freedom; stresses that respect for and defence of human rights and democratisation promote the political, social and economic conditions necessary to guarantee peace and stability and ensure that everyone can live in dignity;
4. Calls on the Council and Commission to put an end to the ambiguity of the Union's policy towards Cuba and to replace both the existing uncoordinated policies of the Member States that trade and invest in Cuba according to their individual interests and the Common Position imposed in 1996 by the launching of a new comprehensive policy, as soon as the release of all those arrested and the cessation of the arbitrary detentions have taken place;
5. Stresses that, in the political field, the new Union policy towards Cuba should be autonomous and respectful of the sovereignty and dignity of the country, and should aim to contribute to its peaceful internal democratic transition; believes in this respect that the Union can play a key role by maintaining a policy aimed at the adoption of positive measures such as the signing, ratification and application of international human rights instruments - in particular of the UN Covenant on Political and Civil Rights as well as that on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights -, by encouraging both authorities and democratic opposition to work together for a peaceful democratic transition and by intensifying the dialogue of the High Representative of the Union with the authorities and with the democratic opposition in the country; in addition, considers that it should fully incorporate other possible positive incentives, including generous cooperation programmes, so as to improve respect for human rights at all levels;
6. Believes that its leading role in the economic, commercial, political, diplomatic and development aid sectors gives the EU an extraordinary capacity to exert moral and political influence and to extend democratisation and respect for human rights in Cuba, provided that the Union becomes a reliable partner also in economic terms both for the government and for the Cuban people; calls, therefore, on the Council and the Commission to promote change through trade and cooperation and to give Cuba, in the framework of the new policy, a commercial and economic status at least similar to that already provided by the Union to other authoritarian regimes (bilateral agreement, Cotonou, etc);
7. Recalls that the application of the democracy clause may under no circumstances affect the provision of humanitarian aid to third countries, irrespective of the type of relations they have with the European Union;
8. Reiterates its proposal to the Commission and Council that an interinstitutional code of conduct be drawn up, along the lines set out in its resolution of 24 April 2002, to ensure a consistent approach to different regions and countries - including Cuba - and to prevent unfair or unequal treatment and double standards in its dealings with all of them;
9. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and Commission, to the Government and National People's Assembly of the Republic of Cuba, and to Oswaldo Payá Sardiñas, the winner of the European Parliament's 2002 Sakharov Prize.