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MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

further to the Council and Commission statements

pursuant to Rule 37(2) of the Rules of Procedure

by Concepció Ferrer and Michael Gahler

on behalf of the PPE-DE Group

on abolition of the death penalty

European Parliament resolution on abolition of the death penalty

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on abolition of the death penalty and the introduction of a universal moratorium on capital punishment,
 - having regard to its previous resolutions on human rights in Europe and the world, particularly its resolution of 4 September 2003,
 - having regard to the guidelines on the death penalty approved by the European Council meeting in Luxembourg on 6 June 1998, in which the EU undertook to work within international organisations to establish a universal moratorium on the death penalty,
 - having regard to the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union,
 - having regard to the declaration on the abolition of the death penalty annexed to the Treaty of Amsterdam,
 - having regard to Rule 37(2) of the Rules of Procedure,
- A. strongly reaffirming that abolition of the death penalty helps in promoting human dignity and gradually extending human rights,
 - B. deeply concerned by the threat of execution that hangs over thousands of people in the world, but encouraged by the fact that the number of abolitionist countries has continued to rise in recent years,
 - C. whereas initiatives in favour of abolition of the death penalty have special political importance,
 - D. stressing the high number of victims of judicial errors among those condemned to death,
 - E. whereas, in relations between the European Union and third countries, the priority given to actions to achieve abolition of the death penalty or a moratorium on capital punishment should be reasserted,
 - F. whereas, since the 2000 financial year, several budget headings have served as important instruments in the European Union's action against the death penalty and they should therefore be fully used,
1. States again its profound conviction that abolition of capital punishment represents an established ethical standard and a fundamental step towards promoting human dignity and encouraging the gradual expansion of and respect for human rights and that this measure will strengthen the alliance of democratic countries in fighting dictatorial regimes and achieving democracy and the rule of law throughout the world;

2. Calls on the states that have not yet done so to support a call for a moratorium within the United Nations on application of the death penalty;
3. Welcomes the Council of Europe's commitment and determination to achieve universal abolition of the death penalty;
4. Reaffirms its view that the EU must continue to work towards universal abolition of the death penalty and calls on the Commission and Council to make abolition of the death penalty a major issue in their relations with non-EU countries, to be taken into account when concluding agreements with them; reasserts its concern at the growing number of death sentences handed down in countries with which the European Union maintains close relations;
5. Calls on all states that still retain the death penalty in their penal legislation to act in accordance with Resolution 2003/67, adopted at the 59th session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, which urges that the death penalty should not be imposed for non-violent acts and crimes committed by people below 18 years of age, people with a mental disorder, pregnant women or mothers with dependent children; strongly opposes use of the death penalty under gender-discriminatory legislation, public executions and cruel punishments such as stoning, which must be ended immediately; and calls for a moratorium on all pending executions with a view to abolishing the death penalty definitively;
6. Calls on the Commission to make full use of the European Union's budget headings relating to democracy and human rights, to support any initiative likely to contribute to the abolition of the death penalty and to encourage a universal moratorium on capital punishment;
7. Calls on the Commission, the Council, the Member States and the European Union's High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy to adopt a common and coordinated approach at the United Nations, based on strengthening international cooperation with a view to adoption of a universal moratorium on capital punishment leading eventually to abolition of the death penalty; invites the Italian Presidency to give concrete expression to this commitment at the United Nations General Assembly;
8. Invites the Commission to give particular attention, as regards aid and political support, to countries that make progress in abolishing the death penalty or who encourage a universal moratorium on capital punishment;
9. Welcomes the abolition of the death penalty for ordinary crimes in Turkey but calls for the death penalty to be abolished in all cases;
10. Mindful that, under the declaration on the abolition of the death penalty annexed to the Treaty of Amsterdam, no candidate country that retains the death penalty can become a member of the European Union;
11. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission and Council.