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MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

further to the Commission statement

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

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on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group

on the situation in Bolivia

European Parliament resolution on the situation in Bolivia

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Rule 37(2) of the Rules of Procedure,
- A. having regard to the mass demonstrations and protests which began on 15 September 2003 against the Bolivian Government's economic model and in particular against the gas export project,
- B. deploring the brutal and military nature of the response of the Bolivian Government, which deployed the army and police to put down the social movement, resulting in more than 140 deaths and hundreds of injured since the beginning of the demonstrations, as well as the refusal by the former government to enter into any kind of dialogue which brought the country to the brink of a civil war,
- C. whereas various ministers and the country's Vice-President had distanced themselves from ex-President Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada in view of his intransigence and of the repressive action taken against demonstrators;
- D. whereas the President and his closest ministers resigned and fled to the United States of America; whereas the Congress of Bolivia decided to replace him with Mr Carlos Mesa, who had hitherto held the post of Vice-President;
- E. having regard to the fact that large sections of Bolivian society, notably the indigenous population, peasants, workers and the unemployed, are largely excluded from the country's political and economic life and that they have a legitimate claim to participate in them;
- F. having regard to the persecution of members of the social movement and in particular of its leaders, notably Mr Evo Morales;
- 1. Takes note of the first declaration by President Carlos Mesa and of his pledge to govern in a spirit of dialogue by organising a referendum on the issue of energy, calling early elections and democratising the political system to render it more inclusive, notably as regards the Aymara and Qechua population;
- 2. Firmly condemns the cruel repressive actions by the previous Government and the forces of law and order against the indigenous population, peasants, workers and the unemployed and expresses its solidarity with the victims, their families and loved ones;
- 3. Welcomes the declarations by the new President pledging that crimes committed in the course of recent events shall not go unpunished;
- 4. Demands that the families of the disappeared be informed immediately of the fate of their loved ones and that those detained be released as soon as possible;

5. Hopes that a consensus will be found among Bolivian society in order that the country's natural resources, notably its sources of energy, serve to promote the development of the country and of regional markets as well as the well-being of its inhabitants, without any foreign interference;
6. Calls on the Member States to make a stand within the international financial institutions in order to resolve the problem of Bolivia's external debt;
7. Considers that the fight against drug trafficking continues to be necessary but that it should not be used for other ends, in particular to suppress the social movement and community work; demands in this connection the release of Oscar Bollati, Mabel Esrad, Carmen Burgos and of the Belgian voluntary worker Guillaume Roelants as well as the Colombian peasant leader Franciso Cortez;
8. Deplores the fact that the Brussels European Council did not unequivocally condemn the massacres perpetrated by the Bolivian army and demand that the guilty be brought to justice;
9. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the Council, the Government of Bolivia and the Secretary-General of the OAS.