

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

1999



2004

Session document

8 March 2004

B5-0140/04

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

tabled for the debate on cases of breaches of human rights, democracy and the rule of law

pursuant to Rule 50 of the Rules of Procedure

by Geoffrey van Orden, Philip Bushill-Matthews, Bernd Posselt, Nirj Deva, Thomas Mann and John Cushnahan

on behalf of the PPE-DE Group

on Burma

PE 342.504

B5-0140/2004

European parliament resolution on Burma

The European parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Burma, in particular, those of 11 April 2002, 13 March 2003, 5 June 2003, and 4 September 2003,
- having regard to the Council's Common Position 96/635/CFSP of 28 October 1996 defined by the Council on the basis of Article J.2 of the Treaty on European Union, on Burma/Myanmar, as renewed and extended by the Council's Common Position 2003/297/CFSP of 28 April 2003 on Burma/Myanmar,
- having regard to the External Relations Council meeting of 16 June 2003 that brought forward the implementation of the extended sanctions,
- having regard to Council Regulation (EC) No 552/97 of 24 March 1997 temporarily withdrawing access to generalised tariff preferences from the Union of Myanmar,
- having regard to Council Regulation (EC) No 1081/2000 of 22 May 2000 prohibiting the sale, supply and export to Burma/Myanmar of equipment which might be used for internal repression or terrorism, and freezing the funds of certain persons related to important governmental functions in that country,

A. whereas Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and other opposition National League for Democracy (NLD) members remain under house arrest following their detention on 30 May 2003 and NLD members continue to suffer arbitrary arrest and imprisonment,

B. whereas EU targeted sanctions against the Burmese military regime (the State Peace and Development Council - SPDC) require review and renewal by 29 April 2004,

C. whereas on 1 March 2004 UN Special Envoy Tan Sri Razali Ismail arrived in Burma for talks with the SPDC and the NLD, meeting both Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and Prime Minister Khin Nyunt,

D. whereas on returning to Kuala Lumpur, Razali Ismail stated that the release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and other detained NLD leaders was an essential precondition for any meaningful dialogue with the regime,

E. whereas Razali Ismail met SPDC leaders in Thailand in February 2004 and was assured by Foreign Minister Win Aung that the SPDC would resume multi-party talks this year,

F. whereas in January 2004 the UN Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Myanmar reported that "the most urgent requirements today are the lifting of all remaining restrictions on the freedoms of expression, movement, information, assembly and association; the repeal of the related "security" legislation; and the opening and reopening of all political parties' offices throughout the country,"

G. whereas on 20 January 2004 the Presidency announced that the EU visa ban and assets freeze list against the SPDC had been updated following a government reshuffle,

H. whereas on 16 June 2003 Council decided to bring forward the implementation of strengthened sanctions against the SPDC, originally envisaged to enter into force in October 2003, following the detention of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and other NLD leaders; whereas Council also agreed "to monitor closely the further evolution of the situation in Burma/Myanmar, and reaffirmed its readiness to react proportionately to future developments,"

I. whereas the SPDC has failed to respect the results of the last elections held in Burma in 1990,

J. whereas the Asia-Europe (ASEM) meeting is scheduled to take place in Hanoi on 8-9 October 2004 and some ASEAN states have indicated that Burma should be entitled to take part,

1. Demands the immediate release and full freedom of movement and expression for Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and other leading NLD members,

2. Demands the immediate release of all other political prisoners held by the SPDC;

3. Calls on the SPDC to initiate immediately meaningful dialogue with the NLD and ethnic groups to bring about a return to democracy and respect for human rights, including ethnic minorities' rights, in Burma;

4. Insists that the SPDC relinquish its grip on power and that the results of the last elections held be fully respected;

5. Calls on the EU Council to agree tough new sanctions against the SPDC to enter into force at the end of 2004 if the regime has not taken tangible steps towards the restoration of democracy in Burma; these measures should include an import ban on products from Burmese industries operated by the SPDC (such as wood and gems) and the curtailing of economic links with state-owned enterprises;

6. Calls on the UN Security Council to adopt a more active and urgent approach towards the situation in Burma and to take a lead role in discussions to bring about return to democracy and respect for human rights in Burma;

7. Calls on ASEAN states not to allow their relationship with the EU to be held hostage by the SPDC and to take meaningful steps to exercise their influence over the Burmese regime to bring about change for the better in Burma;

8. Insists that Burma should not be allowed to take part in the ASEM meeting in October 2004 and, if the SPDC does attend, calls on EU Member States to refuse to participate;

9. Regrets that the Government of the Republic of Ireland decided to establish diplomatic relations on a non-resident basis with Burma on 10th February almost at the start of its term in office as Council Presidency;

10. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments of the ASEAN Member States, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, UN Special Envoy Tan Sri Razali Ismail, the UN Secretary-General and the SPDC.