

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2004



2009

Session document

6.6.2005

B6-0374/2005

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on statements by the Council and Commission

pursuant to Rule 103(2) of the Rules of Procedure

by Armin Laschet

on behalf of the PPE-DE Group

on Uzbekistan

European Parliament resolution on Uzbekistan

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) with Uzbekistan,
 - having regard to the Commission's Central Asia Strategy Paper 2002-2006,
 - having regard to the conclusions of the General Affairs and External Relations Council meeting of May 23-24 2005 on Uzbekistan,
 - having regard to its previous resolutions on Kyrgyzstan and Central Asia,
 - having regard to Rule 103(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas unrest erupted in Uzbekistan's fourth-largest city of Andijan on 13 May when armed attackers seized a local prison and government headquarters and thousands of people demonstrated in the streets,
- B. whereas human right groups and opposition political parties said that about 500 people were killed when Uzbek security forces fired into the crowds, while Uzbek President Islam Karimov blamed the violence on Islamist groups, denying that security forces had opened fire on unarmed civilians, and putting the death toll at only 169, most of them 'Islamic extremist terrorists',
- C. whereas the United Nations called on 18 May for an independent inquiry into the purported mass killings to resolve contradictions between government and opposition accounts of the shootings, stressing that Uzbekistan faces international isolation and the prospect of having aid cut off unless it allows a full inquiry,
- D. whereas on 20 May Uzbek President Islam Karimov rejected United Nations calls for an international inquiry, saying the Uzbek authorities would conduct their own investigation,
- E. whereas, nearly three weeks after the unrest, Andijan residents still fear government retribution for speaking about the events, and the town remains essentially closed to journalists and human rights investigators, while the government has issued instructions to the Uzbek media on how to cover events related to the violence and has blocked access to an increasing number of foreign media websites,
- F. whereas the Uzbek government has a long-standing record of torture, ill-treatment and serious human rights abuses against detainees, as well as harsh treatment of human rights activists and political opponents,
- G. whereas the Uzbek President Islam Karimov justifies his strong-arm rule by saying radical Islamic fundamentalists from the Ferghana valley want to overthrow his government and set up an Islamic caliphate across Central Asia,

- H. whereas Uzbekistan is an ally in the US war on terror, and leases its Khanabad air base to the US military, which uses it as a staging base for its operations in neighbouring Afghanistan,
1. Deeply regrets the appalling loss of life during the violence in Andijan on 13 May, expresses its sympathy with the people who have suffered as a consequence of the violence and calls upon the Uzbek authorities to act with restraint in order to avoid further loss of life;
 2. Urges the Uzbek government to respect its international commitments to democracy, the rule of law and human rights, and hence to reconsider its categorical refusal to allow an independent international inquiry into the events;
 3. Stresses that the Uzbek government, by continuing to refuse an international inquiry, is failing to meet even its most basic obligations under the PCA's human rights and democracy clause;
 4. Urges the Council and Commission to suspend the PCA with Uzbekistan should the Uzbek government not agree to allow an independent international inquiry, citing the human rights and democracy clause of the Agreement;
 5. Underlines that the inquiry should be set up by the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (UN OHCHR); that it should be composed of international experts with experience in conducting investigations and gathering evidence, and should be instructed to identify the perpetrators, and thus the role of the authorities in the killing of unarmed civilians; that the international inquiry must be granted full, unhindered access to all parts of Andijan and that this should form part of the EU's conditions for lifting, or not invoking, the suspension of the PCA;
 6. Urges the Council and Commission to provide humanitarian assistance in close cooperation with the UN agencies and other international organisations, and calls upon the Uzbek authorities to grant immediate access to the area for this assistance;
 7. Calls on the US Administration to suspend its negotiations with the Uzbek Government regarding a formal, long-term agreement that would allow the United States to maintain its military base in Uzbekistan and provide the Uzbek government with considerable financial benefits, and to consider other alternatives in the region; urges the Council and Commission to raise this topic during the upcoming EU-US summit;
 8. Urges the Council and Commission, pending an independent inquiry into the violence, to consider putting in place an arms embargo, similar to the one introduced on China following the military crackdown by Chinese government security forces in Tiananmen Square in 1989;
 9. Urges NATO to suspend Uzbekistan's participation in the Partnership for Peace programme and calls upon NATO member states to halt their support for Uzbekistan's armed forces if an international investigation is not conducted;
 10. Underlines the importance of addressing the root causes of the instability in the region and

urges the Uzbek authorities to carry out domestic reforms, which are essential for economic development and the achievement of democracy and stability in the country; calls upon the Council and Commission to support such reforms effectively and in close coordination with other relevant international actors;

11. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission, the President, Government and Parliament of Uzbekistan, the UN Secretary General, the OSCE and the Governments of China, Russia and the United States.