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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 Charles Tannock, Jas Gawronski, Mario Mauro, Antonio Tajani and
Marcello Vernola

on behalf of the PPE-DE Group

on the situation in Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam on the occasion of the 30th
anniversary of the 'Communist revolutions' of 1975

European Parliament resolution on the situation in Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the 'Communist revolutions' of 1975

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam,
 - having regard to the cooperation agreements between the European Community, of the one part, and the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, of the other part,
 - having regard to the EC-Cambodia country strategy paper 2004-2006, the EC-Vietnam country strategy paper 2002-2006 and the EC-Laos country strategy paper 2002-2006,
 - having regard to the EU guidelines on the protection of human rights activists approved by the European Council in July 2004,
 - having regard to Rule 103(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. recognising the important progress made in recent years by the three countries in socio-economic development, thanks to pro-market reforms, and supporting their efforts to engage with regional and non-regional partners in multilateral fora,
- B. whereas the Communist or Communist-led regimes have kept Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam under dictatorship for 30 years and the current situation regarding the most basic human rights remains highly worrying,
- C. supporting the actions taken by the European Union, its Member States and other members of the international community to assist governments' programmes to reduce poverty and improve the livelihoods of the populations,
- D. regretting that the economic and social reforms are not yet matched by adequate political and civil rights reforms,
- E. welcoming the holding of the first meetings in June 2005 of the EU-Vietnam and EU-Laos Working Groups on institution-building, administrative reform, governance and human rights, but considering that the fundamental rights situation remains today a matter of concern,
- F. welcoming the adoption by Vietnam in June 2005 of a 'Master Plan on its Present and Future Relations with the EU' as well as the increased openness by the Government to discuss human rights issues,
- G. whereas on Thursday, 3 February 2005 the National Assembly of the Kingdom of Cambodia lifted the parliamentary immunity of three members of the opposition party, the Sam Rainsy Party: the chairman, Sam Rainsy, Chea Poch and Cheam Channy,

- H. whereas the lifting of the parliamentary immunity of these three deputies took place in a context of general deterioration of respect for civil liberties in Cambodia,
- I. whereas Mr Cheam Channy and his colleague, Mr Khom Piseth, were tried by a military tribunal in contravention of Cambodian national law, which forbids civilians to be brought before military courts,
- J. whereas the Cambodian judicial system raises serious doubts as to its ability to conduct proceedings against the Khmer Rouge leaders in the court set up for that purpose,
- K. whereas, however, the authorities of the Lao People's Democratic Republic have, in spite of urgent appeals by the European Union, international organisations and other members of the international community, continued and even stepped up their attacks on the freedom of expression, press, assembly, religion and political opposition,
- L. whereas the international media and human rights organisations continue to report serious abuses against the Lao-Hmong population, pursued through the jungle by the Government Army, and Christians continue to be arrested for practising their faith and dozens of them are still imprisoned,
- M. whereas the main leaders of the '26 October 1999 Movement' are still detained,
- N. whereas foreign observers, including from Amnesty International, are forbidden access to Laotian territory,
- O. whereas the Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam has been persecuted since 1975 for its commitment to religious freedom, human rights and democratic reform and the Protestant Churches (including the Mennonite Church) are repressed and outlawed,
- P. whereas the Vietnamese authorities are relentless in their efforts to crack down further on freedom of expression and freedom of the press, which have long been suppressed, including by setting up a cyber police force in 2004, and 'cyber dissidents' are jailed for 'spying' simply for having circulated information on the internet,
- Q. whereas the ethnic minorities of the High Plateau region (in the centre and north), in particular the Montagnards, are cruelly repressed (brutal confiscation of ancestral land and anti-Protestant repression) and the refugees that have been repatriated under the recent Cambodia-Vietnam-UNHCR agreement after having fled Vietnam have been the victims of retaliation by the Vietnamese authorities in violation of the 1951 Geneva Convention,
- R. whereas the last bastion of civil society, the unrecognised religions of Vietnam, continue to be ruthlessly repressed by the Vietnamese Government to the detriment of the country's sustainable development,
- S. whereas, in spite of the recommendations of the United Nations Human Rights Committee (ref. CCPR/CO/75/VNM, 26 July 2002), the Vietnamese authorities are using their 'Legal System Development Strategy', a 10-year plan funded by donor countries, particularly the European Union and several of its Member States, to adopt repressive laws,

T. whereas prisoners of conscience, including the Catholic priests Pham Minh Tri (whose imprisonment led to dementia) and Nguyen Duc Vinh, who have been imprisoned for 18 years, and the Hoa Hao Buddhist Ngo Quang Vinh (87), suffer a terrible fate,

1. Calls on the Cambodian authorities to:

- release immediately and unconditionally Cheam Channy, return his parliamentary mandate and restore the parliamentary immunity of Sam Rainsy and the two other representatives of his party as already requested in the EP resolution of 10 March 2005 and the Inter-Parliamentary Union in its resolution of 19 October 2005;
- engage in political and institutional reforms to build a democratic state governed by the rule of law and founded on respect of fundamental freedoms;
- show evidence at last of a real willingness to tackle effectively the endemic scourges of corruption, large-scale deforestation and the sex tourism industry, and to pursue and bring to justice all those involved in these activities;

2. Calls on the Laotian authorities to:

- release all political prisoners and prisoners of conscience, the Christians imprisoned for not renouncing their faith, the Hmong and, in particular, the guides of European journalists arrested in 2003;
- draw up and implement as soon as possible the reforms needed to make possible the democratisation of the country, to ensure the peaceful expression of political opposition, to recognise the principle of dual nationality for Laos abroad, and to ensure that multiparty elections are held in the near future under the supervision of the United Nations, in order to begin rebuilding the nation;
- put an end to the campaigns of persecution and repression targeting the Lao-Hmong population, other ethnic minorities and the country's Christian communities;
- allow Specialised Agencies of the United Nations and representatives of humanitarian organisations unrestricted access, so that they can make independent visits to political prisoners, the Hmong population hiding in the jungle and all ethnic and religious minorities in Laos;

3. Calls on the Vietnamese authorities to:

- begin a genuine era of dialogue and reconciliation on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War, by involving all sections of the population in the economic, social, intellectual and political development of Vietnam;
- undertake far-reaching political reform in favour of democracy and the rule of law, initially by allowing all schools of thought to have a voice and ensuring political plurality;
- implement the Legal System Development Strategy in line with the recommendations of the UN Human Rights Committee and the provisions of the International Covenant

on Civil and Political Rights;

- put an end to the repression of members of the Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam and to recognise officially its existence and the existence of all other unrecognised Churches in the country;
 - release immediately all Vietnamese political prisoners and prisoners of conscience detained for having legitimately and peacefully exercised their rights of freedom of opinion, expression, press and religion, especially Thich Huyen Quang and Thich Quang Do, considered by the United Nations to be victims of arbitrary imprisonment (Opinion 18/2005 of the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, 26 May 2005);
 - ensure the full application of basic rights enshrined in the Vietnamese Constitution and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, in particular by allowing a truly free press;
4. Calls on the Council and the Commission to carry out a detailed assessment of the policies applied in Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam since 1975 and their effects on the freedoms and living conditions of Cambodian, Laotian and Vietnamese citizens and to present it with the conclusions of this assessment;
 5. Calls on the Council and the Commission to organise a ceremony during 2005 in memory of the victims of these regimes;
 6. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the Governments of Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam.